

First Lady
of THE LIGHTHOUSE

a biography of
WINIFRED HOLT MATHER

edited by Edith Holt Bloodgood
in collaboration with
Rufus Graves Mather

Helen Keller, one of the distinguished Honorary Vice-Presidents of The Lighthouse of The New York Association for the Blind, wrote the following about Mrs. Mather's biography:

“IT is interesting to think how The Lighthouse has grown mightily in bulk and in its resources to serve the blind of New York City. I am proud that this biography of Winifred Holt Mather is to start March 27, 1952 on its pilgrimage of Inner Light. The story of her untiring labors — the seed-pod from which such a magnificent harvest has sprouted — will be a forceful inspiration to others who wish to pioneer either in the education of the handicapped or prevention of blindness where no such work has been attempted before.”

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Bloodgood, Edith Holt

First lady of the lighthouse.

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Bloodgood, Edith Holt

First lady of the lighthouse.

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EDITH HOLT BLOODGOOD

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RUFUS GRAVES MATHER

THE LIGHTHOUSE
NEW YORK ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND
NEW YORK

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THE LIGHTHOUSE

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND

DEDICATED
TO
THE BLIND
OF ALL NATIONS

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FOREWORD

We wish to express our gratitude to: the Choate family, Dr. Helen Keller, and Dr. Edward Ellis Allen for permission to use their letters; Messrs. E. P. Dutton and The New York Times for allowing us to reprint articles written by Mrs. Mather; Dr. Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., and Miss Daisy Fiske Rogers for invaluable suggestions and constructive criticism.

Edith Holt Bloodgood
Rufus Graves Mather

EDITORS' NOTE

After arduously assembling Winifred's copious correspondence, the editors found themselves with an impractical bulk of copy some three volumes thick. At this point Professor Mather, Winifred's brother-in-law, advised putting the mass in the hands of Mr. Albert Wall, magazine editor and writer. Mr. Wall, we believe, has successfully accomplished a delicate two-fold task: that of reducing the life and letters of Winifred Holt to one volume without in any way distorting her meanings or opinions. And because many letters described similar incidents or were of purely personal rather than of general interest, Mr. Wall when necessary combined the best parts of several letters, made pertinent cancellations, and wrote in connecting commentary. This explains the absence of confusing indications of omissions in the text itself.

PREFACE

Winifred Holt Mather left an unfinished autobiography in addition to voluminous notes and letters. Her husband and her sister have utilized much of this material in their story of the beautiful and efficient life in which both were admiring participants. They tell of Winifred's initiation into the philanthropy which, beginning with young womanhood, held her enthralled until her end; how she pioneered in and pushed lay agencies that, though beginning locally, became national; also how she went abroad during World War I and founded French, Italian, and other Lighthouses for the Blind; and, too, how she later carried out with her husband remarkable campaigns for the blind throughout Europe, the Near and Far East, in South America and the West Indies.

For countless centuries the world's attitude toward the blind was a compound of pity bolstered somewhat by outright charity. Mrs. Mather's non-sentimental, practical approach to the problem resulted from her London visit in 1904 to the Royal Normal College and Academy of Music for the Blind. There she met the principal, himself blind, who was soon to be knighted for his unique contributions to the education of the blind. His method of training was the opposite

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of appeasement, a fact I know well, for I taught under him. Of course, Sir Francis Campbell and our Mrs. Mather made enemies. Uncommonly strong characters do; but they are to be commended for it.

So as a lifelong fellow worker I commend to all who are interested in seeing justice attempted and perhaps eventually done, in this really delicate and difficult department of philanthropy, the Life and Letters of Winifred Holt Mather.

Edward Ellis Allen, D.Sc.

Director Emeritus

Perkins Institution for the Blind

I

EARLY YEARS

Even the best, or worst, autobiography must, I suppose, give some indication of one's lineage. Mine, briefly, goes like this:

My great-greatgrandfather, on my mother's side, was Richard West, who married Maria Temple. Her family owned historic Stowe in England. To create it, three villages were destroyed, and although the resulting new estate employed three hundred gardeners, I can find no evidence that there ever were bathtubs. I pray that now the place has become a boys' school, it may do some good in the world.

One of my grandfathers, James Selby West, married the daughter of William Gale, "a selectman of the town of New York who helped to have the town's dependents moved from Bloomingdale to Randall's Island and instituted the use of female attendants for female prisoners." As a silversmith he amassed a considerable fortune. My other grandfather migrated from Connecticut to Maryland and made his fortune by discovering a process to can oysters. He married Anne Sebold of Pennsylvania.

Mary Florence West, my mother, was an only child who, at 18, married Henry Holt in 1863;

he was of an early New England family whose first American ancestor had signed the second charter of New Haven and had subsequently lived on a grant from the crown.

So much for geneology.

I was born Nov. 17, 1870. My earliest visual recollections are of my be-whiskered father, my mother, and my baby sister, Edith, who seemed very important to my parents but hardly worth my attention.

I do remember vividly, however, my love of summer places; particularly one at Lake Dunmore in the Green Mountains. It was here that I had my first toothache, a sensation I reveled in because it meant a long drive in a buggy with father and mother to the dentist in Middlebury. (I wonder what niche in heaven those old-fashioned buggies now occupy? Vehicles of such high romance and drama, must not their souls abide?) While at Middlebury I was outfitted with my first pair of shoes with real heels. When I walked in them I felt very high up and proud, a little as if I were flying.

In 1887 we returned to our big old red-brick house at 14 East 54th Street, in New York City. A great wisteria vine climbed up the front of the house. I learned that it was a gift from our ambassador to China, but these words conveyed nothing to my mind then.

Back of our house there was a yard, and

never was there such a heavenly place as this garden! In one corner grew golden fruit on a peach tree, large, yellow and pink. To think of it made me understand ambrosia. Near this wonder stood a plum tree whose lovely blossoms first prepared me to love Japan, of which then I had never heard.

Father and mother were very musical, and both loved Italian opera. They craved beautiful things. Art, music, and literature were essential to them. The first thing I learned and felt that I deeply needed was music, soft sounds and soft voices. Even now I am ashamed of how I unconsciously cringe from noises and harsh voices and the unreasonable prejudice which a bad voice will bring to my judgement of people.

One day, after mother had been ill with excruciating neuralgia, from which she often suffered (I know now that she had angina pectoris), she told me that she would not be with us very much longer and that when she had gone, I must take care of my father, my little sister, Edie, and my two brothers. Of course, I did not grasp fully what she meant, but with all my heart and soul I promised to do as she wished and to look after the family in her absence. Shortly, thereafter, when I was eight, my mother died.

Father's grief was so intense that for months, although he forced himself to attend business, he would avoid walking where he might meet

people he knew. My aunt Ella came to care for us all, but my father's heart was too heavy for his body and the doctor ordered him to go abroad lest he have a total breakdown. So, leaving us reluctantly, he sailed for Europe.

Miss Edwards was the head of a school that I was sent to soon after father's return. I soon adored her. With her I loved to sing the opening hymns which started each school morning. She felt her religion deeply and showed her fervor for it intensely during school devotions, with tearful eyes and emotion which emphasized her large Roman nose. She was very slender and tall and, despite her intense piety, was very human and humorous.

One Sunday morning dressed in my prettiest frock, I sat in the circle of adoring children around our Sunday School teacher who was answering our questions about the Bible. At the end of the first hour, Bibles would be awarded to those, like myself, who had satisfactorily mastered the catechism. When my turn came, I was eager to ask my teacher a question. Something had to be cleared up which had rankled in my heart ever since I had heard it at the last Sunday School class. When my allotted time came, I asked, "Please, it can't be that if little babies who don't know anything die before they are baptized that they go to Hell?" Came the answer.

"It is very sad, but alas, it is so, my dear." "Oh! Mrs. X," I exclaimed with rising voice, "Not wee little babies who can't help themselves, they can't go to Hell." "Yes, my dear, as I said, it is very sad, but they must." A wave of fierce indignation swept me. What, my baby sister, my little brothers, who had died! This church had sent them to Hell. With dignity I arose and with deadly calm I addressed my teacher, "I am very sorry, but if your church sends helpless babies to Hell, I don't want my Bible; I don't want this church." And with the righteous wrath which filled my Puritan ancestors when they fled from the false teachings of the Church of the Mother Country, I left that Sunday School.

It was not Miss Edward's or her staff's fault that I learned little at her school. Although I was put into a class of one under Miss Jaudens to learn spelling, and although Mrs. Lockwood and Mr. Brearley, founder of that school, did their best to supervise my scholarship, I never learned excepting at home. I suppose it is safe for me to confess that during school hours I read many Waverly novels skilfully hidden in my geography text. But I usually managed to squeeze through examinations. At verbal ones I tried to sound so profound—borrowing choice expressions of father's—that I succeeded more or less in hypnotizing or stunning the teacher. Written tests were a bit harder to bluff. All in

all, in those days, I felt that schooling interfered with my education.

To me the visitors to our house were far more interesting. Those I remember best were: General Francis Walker, who founded the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; John Fiske, the historian who sang the dear German songs that I loved and often sang with him. President Gilman often came to talk over the problems of the Johns Hopkins University with father. Then Mr. John Ames Mitchell, another great friend, often came and drew funny pictures for us. Aunt Nellie gave him the suggestion that resulted in the founding of the old *Life* magazine. Later came Professors William James and Royce, and Mr. Hodgson of the Psychical Research.

II

WANDERING YEARS

My father was now often absent. When he returned to us he was unusually tender and loving, and I felt something different about him. There seemed something new and electric, even agitated, about him. One day he returned to us wearing a flower in his buttonhole. And that evening he stroked my head, and, looking deep into my eyes, asked me: "Win, dear, would you like to have me marry again?" I paused ever so little as my heart beat a loud tattoo. Then I said loyally: "Yes, father dear, if it would make you happy."

Before Christmas that year, my father married. He said he did not wish us to call our stepmother "Mother." That title belonged to one only whom he and we always loved. They had agreed on the Italian name for stepmother, Matrigna.

The next summer a new baby, Florence, was born into the family. Soon father, Matrigna, the baby, Edie, and I boarded a great ocean steamer for an extensive tour that included Antwerp, Hanover, Rome, the Riviera, and London. Wherever we went in Rome, terrible beggars, some with empty eye sockets, some with ophthal-

mic eyes, held out scrawny hands and begged pitifully. I longed with all my young enthusiasm to ameliorate their tragic lives.

One day an utterly new and absorbing world which I had never imagined opened to me. Father took me to the Neighborhood Settlement on Delancey Street, off the lower Bowery. It took about an hour by slow streetcar from our house to Delancey Street. Strange souvenir of French aristocracy, that name. It seemed as though all suffering humanity, more even than in India, was concentrated there, because the tenements of this Bowery neighborhood were tall buildings each housing in their evil smelling fire-traps many closely crowded men, women, and children. Such open spaces as there were back of the original tenements were now built up, leaving little room for air, sunshine, or decency. The streets were littered with debris and such crude iron balconies as some structures boasted in lieu of fire escape landings defeated their purpose by becoming storage places for refuse, rags, boxes, ash cans, and coal scuttles. Some were turned into the family wash rooms or laundry.

Of this motley society I now became a part. As my life had been an entirely sheltered one, it is still with some surprise that I look back on this entire rupture of my father's ideas and theories of protecting me from the world. I was suddenly launched in my entire ignorance at

sixteen from my home into the toughest part of New York, where I went one afternoon each week to work at the Neighborhood Settlement. This was probably the very best thing that could have happened to me. It led to my knowing the boys' families who welcomed me to the poorest and most sordid of the tenements. In one of these I found an aging father, his delicate wife, and their two sons. These German immigrants lived in one room, and all I could find to contribute to their gaiety and sustenance was a cat of very doubtful pedigree and one lemon of uncertain vintage. The father, a baker descended from a long line of bakers, was out of work and hope. The eldest son was losing his sight. They apparently had no friends or interests beyond those provided by the Settlement. I decided that the first job was to save the sight of the son and heir, a tall boy a little older than myself. So I led him to a clinic. My zeal, however, weakened when I found myself with a helpless charge before a group of doctors and nurses. The most formidable of the doctors inquired: "Is this man your son?" "Oh, no," I replied. "I am sixteen. This was my first effort to help the blind. I am happy to record that my friend recovered his sight and became a trained carpenter, able to provide for his parents and brother. As reward for this pioneer salvage work, the father presented me with some ancient, hand-carved wooden cake

molds depicting the biblical story of creation. This was my first donation to work for the blind.

Time sped. The new baby whom we adored died, the second of my sisters to be taken by that now preventable disease, diphtheria. During her illness we were sent to live with my grandmother, Mrs. West, at the then smart Windsor Hotel in New York. I remember being greatly depressed and impressed when I learned that my father was to pay five dollars a day for our board and lodging there. I did not see how he ever could get so much money.

I kept up going once a week to my Boys' Club in Delancy Street. This was a great blessing in the monotony of my life. In hot weather, the tenements poured forth their inhabitants. Children and mothers sought the streets and sat on the sidewalks, sewing and playing. I noticed that there was no good water for them to drink. This condition I could not tolerate. Quickly I wrote a statement of the situation and, carrying my plea in hand, made a round of begging visits to those I knew. Before very long I had accumulated the sum needed for a simple metal fountain with good filtered water. The fountain bore no statement of how it had come there, but with its being there came a flood of happiness to my perplexed heart. At last I felt that I had a right to existence.

My big brother brought many bright spots into

our days. Carried away by his knowledge and enthusiasm, we often were swept off to hear wonderful music, plays, and opera. Those were the great days of the opera. As a child I had heard Anton Seidel lead the Valkyrie, with Lili Lehman as Brunhilda and his wife singing Sieglinda. To Seidel I owe my first musical ecstasy, followed by the De Reszke Brothers, Melba, Eames, Plançon, and their great confreres.

My brother's standards were of the best. He had been the music and art critic of the "Yale Courant." Soon he was writing art reviews for "The Springfield Republican," and other papers. He lectured at Yale, Columbia, and many places throughout the country in favor of good entertainment, cheap theatres, and opera. He had written much and inspired many communities to push forward the movement for the Little Theatre. Before his sudden and unexpected death in 1931, he had brought out a book on "Incidental Music." All this work was done in what leisure he could find from his work as vice president of Henry Holt and Company.

At this time I became ill and slept badly, the mosquitoes were terrible, and in those days windows were not screened. I became weaker, suffered from fever, excruciating headaches, and malaria. Our doctor urged our going abroad and offered us a letter to his brother in Italy. My

aunt, Mrs. Mortimer, had recently lost her husband and she offered to go with my sister and me.

* * * *

Unfortunately, Winifred never got beyond this point in writing her autobiography. What follows is an informal account of her early years, built from her letters, notebooks, and her husband's records—all selected and edited by her sister, Edith.

* * * *

Winifred writes to the family at home:

Anglo-American Hotel
Florence, Italy, 1894

There is very little to tell you. I have been to see the great Italian doctor—Aunt Emma is now writing about my interview. Dr. Grocco impressed me as one of the great men it has been my fortune to meet. I am going to obey his orders and, if not he—mayhap, my faith in him, may make me whole.

Much love,
WH

Florence, Italy
Feb. 18, 1894

My D.D.: (Dear Daddy)

Though it is Roland's turn, I feel as if I must write to you this week. I am interested to hear

of your 'cello work. My winter has been a lazy one and saving Italian, and what one can't help learning in Florence, I have not learned anything. You ask in your letter, which I was rejoiced to get (the one in which I thought that you said you had bought a house—but I took an “&” for an “'” and was so misled) for journal letters, but if I did send them you would find them sorry reading. Something like this: bed ten hours—breakfast eggs—Italian, rest—lunch, rest—walk—dress—dinner, read a little, bed. You see that there is so much bed that it isn't very interesting—that's why I don't write more because I have so little time. Last week . . . (last sheet missing).

WH

Florence, Italy
April 14, 1894
Easter Sunday

Dear Family:

We have a surprise for you. Win is going to a studio every day and modelling. As far as I can learn, Win is the only girl in a private professional studio here and people think her in great luck. Mrs. Mason brought in a sculptor, a Mr. Trentanove, on one of our Tuesdays, and Win asked him if he knew of anyone who could and would criticise a mud pie she had been working on during the winter. He himself called and

seemed well pleased with Win's work. Said he took no pupils save the two the government sent him from the Academy every year, but that it would give him great pleasure if Win would work under him. Win goes now every day to his studio and is getting on very well. Mr. Trentanove sees great possibilities for her if she can keep on. Dr. Grocco knows of W's working and approves.

Love,
Edith

Florence
Feb. 26, 1896

Dear Daddy:

Last night we went to:

Il "Ballo di Beneficenza"
a profito delle Piccole Suore dei Poveri:

Grand Hotel della Pace;
Biglietto d'invito per le Signorine
de la Patronessa

La Marchesa Della Stufa.

This all came about through our dear little teacher Signorina Cantgalli who introduced us to the Marchesa Della Stufa. We had a most delightful glimpse of the summit of Italian Society. We had such a good time and Signorina and the Marchesa introduced such useful young men, that we were persuaded to stay to the German.

All this may sound strange to you, especially

when you realize that we knew no men at all when we went into the ballroom, but you will be astonished when you hear that we talked Italian most of the evening! Only two of the men we met talked French glibly, and we found that they were much happier and more at ease when we talked Italian, of which our vocabulary may be some three hundred words.

1897, shortly before Winifred and Edith returned to New York, Mr. Holt moved to a larger house, at 711 Madison Avenue, where he felt there would be room for all. Winifred's notes tell of the beginning of a wonderful friendship.

Dressed in my prettiest frock, I waited in Father's drawing room to welcome Mr. Carl Schurz and his daughter, Miss Schurz . . . The long table in the dining room was bright with sparkling cut glass and silver shining against the background of the dark red walls. By my father sat a distinguished middle-aged woman, well-dressed and with vital, crinkly gray hair. She held his interest. Now he was laughing! Next to me sat the father. His dominant feature was a high, broad brow. Golden pince-nez adorned the long, beak-like nose. The lower part of his face sported a well-groomed, curly mushache and beard. The man was tall, slender, erect with still something military in his carriage.

I remember that he had been a general in his friend Lincoln's war, but now the diplomat (Minister to Spain) and statesman (Secretary of the Interior, former Senator) dominated the fighting man, and the diplomat soon withdrew beneath his smiling, simple friendliness and wit.

Life had made me very shy and distrustful of myself. But the genial, sunny atmosphere which my neighbor diffused made me forget myself and my responsibility as hostess. My imagination skipped happily about the world following the brilliant talk and enchanting anecdotes of Mr. Schurz. He was boyish in his enthusiasm, interest, and sincerity. He was interested in me, too. Could this great personality become my friend? Could I ever tell him of my problems and get his help to settle them? When Charles Kingsley was asked what had made his life, he answered, "I had a friend." Carl Schurz remained my friend until his death. With him I could share my hopes and fears, my joys and sorrows—knowing that from him I would get that wise help which only a fearless man, experienced in all that the world offers, could have distilled from life.

I was destined to know all his family. His two daughters, older than I, were also very close to me, as were his brilliant sons. My sister shared this priceless intimacy and often we lived as

guests of this united and gay family in their wooded retreat by the shore of Lake George.

Neighbors—children and grownups—people from Europe, Asia, and Africa, all called to pay tribute to our host, the friend of all peoples, especially if they happened to be underprivileged. All sought his brilliant understanding, beating a path to the refuge where he had sought rest and quiet. There was usually a good reason for seeing most of them. "That young man was a fine fellow, and some day might be of service to the country . . . The boy had written a play; he had talent and needed encouragement . . . That Negro was a fine student and needed a chance, it was so hard to be black." So on the sunny veranda, the genial, aging man received all sorts of folk. Few ever spoke with him without receiving something from the thoughtful sage, the merry philosopher, the wise diplomat. He was not a flatterer, but he usually saw good even in some precious rascals, and his belief in people helped them to believe in themselves. His firm hand-shake, as his blue eyes shone kindly through golden spectacles, made one sure that the world was a good place. By such example did he help two perplexed girls, Edith and myself, to overcome our problems, to find our way.

This next letter shows Winifred's growing sense of philanthropy:—

Florence, Italy
Anglo-American Hotel
May 27, 1901

D.D.:

Mr. Mitchell's letter and the review in "Life" met with my sentiments about your "Civics," but I have no moment for them now. I must prepare a statement for Prince Corsini to use to help in abolishing some of the medieval outrages which exist in the hospitals in this inconsistent town. The outrages were forced on my notice because our dear maid, Alduina, has been and is very ill with rheumatic fever. After keeping her in a room in Via Montabello for some days, I took her on the best advice to the hospital. The condition in which I found she was kept there you can read when I forward you my statement to the Prince. Suffice it for the present that I spent about three days investigating, talking, and finally removing the maid from the hospital. Grocco, who has no control at the place, backed me; so does the Marchesa Farinola, and the Prince Corsini has promised to see that the conditions which must cause a great yearly loss of life are abolished. Curious that it takes little insignificant me to rouse these people from their criminal indifference.

High art has suffered much from the succession of bad luck which followed me. I have *nothing*

in sculpture this year, but have learned much. You must realize that I have used every moment that I could steal from bigger things for study, but I have not had a fair chance this year. You have made the Holt opus for 1901, and I have nothing to complain of, but please, D.D., be very generous and have in mind that my life has not been all beer and skittles, and that I must yet have time for study. I have only begun.

Winifred.

(Note Edith had suffered all winter from a low Typhoid fever.)

From Winifred's Notes:

Now my sister Edith and I are studying music, Italian, drawing and sculpture in Florence. One day we went to a concert. We little thought of where God was leading us, to what tragedies of life and death the innocent concert to which we were bent would send us. We took our seats. A young violinist was making his debut. His talent was not strong enough to hold my truest attention, and I began to study the audience. Would people like these someday come to hear us sing? Great things had been promised us by our teachers. My sister's voice was an appealing soprano, mine a dramatic soprano of range and volume. Suddenly my thoughts were completely

arrested by a group of young boys, in the uniform of some State School, who were totally absorbed in the music. I wondered at their glad absorption and rigid attention. Then I saw that they were all blind. Music had for the time taken their tragedy from them and brought them light.

I called my sister's attention to them, saying: "When we return to America, where we know those who can help, we must see that the blind have music and there are no empty seats where they might find joy and forget their blindness." In answer she gently squeezed my hand.

Edith writes:

In 1902 friends beckoned us to England, where we hoped no more fevers would overwhelm us.

We found a tiny house off Sloane Square, London. It had been a carpenter's whose workshop was a one-room little building in the small garden behind the house. This made a good studio for Winifred.

I can find no letters or notes among Winifred's papers recording this year in England and the happy travels with Roland in pursuit of music on the Continent later on.

I well recollect that Mr. and Mrs. Choate were at the Embassy and that we often went there for grand parties. Father's authors, May Sinclair and Anthony Hope, were very good to us.

I also remember clearly that Winifred and I had several serious conversations concerning our future. We concluded that we were young and full of fun, that we amused the people we lived amongst, but that we were foreigners who were not taking up any responsibilities for our country or theirs.

When our dear brother Roland joined us he agreed.

III

WINIFRED'S LIFE WORK BEGINS

Among Winifred's notes was this declaration of her intent to write a formal history of the Lighthouse movement. As with her autobiography, this project never was finished; nevertheless, such a history does emerge from Winifred's correspondence, both personal and professional:

I have been asked often to give the story of the origin and growth of the Lighthouse—why it came into being and how its growth was made possible and what its mission has been and is.

At a patriotic bazaar at the Lighthouse, after the great military band had quite deafened me, a soft-voiced, blind woman said to me, "I wish that you would write the story of the Lighthouse for us." As I have tried all my life to grant any wish that I could of a blind person, that request provoked this book.

The material from which I have to choose seems endless, for not only must I tell the story of Lighthouse No. 1 but of the many succeeding widespread efforts to bring justice to the blind. Many stories which I would like to tell space will not permit. Many, too, are included in "The Light Which Cannot Fail," published in 1922 by

E. P. Dutton & Co., but which can now be had, I believe, only from the Lighthouse.

Mr. Richard Watson Gilder, 2nd President of the Lighthouse on the origin of the Association—

“The son of a Lincolnshire farmer one day saw an apple fall from a tree. One day two American girls saw some blind boys enjoying a concert in Italy. Others besides Newton had seen apples fall without cogitating upon the law of gravitation. Others besides the Misses Holt had seen blind persons enjoy music—and make it—but apparently no others had given deep attention to the scene, or had acted upon its suggestion. From perceiving the happiness of the sightless in the hearing of music, these girls of a musical family, when they returned to New York, formed a committee including blind persons for the distribution to the blind of unsold tickets to concerts.

“That was one of the happiest thoughts of our day and generation; but from these happy thoughts proceeded another. These young New Yorkers, by the pathway of music, thus accidentally came in contact with the needs of the blind and soon they were asking themselves and others the question. “Why should not the blind be employed?” As Helen Keller has narrated, they were told that in a world of machinery, specified industry, and keen competition the blind

man could not expect to find profitable occupation. Some went so far as to say that it would be cruel to add to the burden of infirmity the burden of labor. As if some of the blind were not already working. As if to be without work were not the heaviest burden mortal could be called upon to endure. As if there were no such thing as "Light through work". It was in November, 1905, that the Misses Holt organized the New York Association for the Blind. With this was amalgamated the committee of tickets for the Blind, and since then the work has gone on apace".

Although it was not conventional at the turn of the century, Henry Holt generously rented a house for Winifred, Edith, and Roland at 44 East 78th Street, and made most of the top floor into a fine studio for Winifred.

There Mr. Schurz came often to sit for his portrait, believing perhaps that this work would help Winifred win a place in the field of sculpture. Winifred evidently put on the finishing touches at the Schurz's Lake George home, as the following letter shows:

Lake George, N. Y.
Sept. 26, 1903

My dear friend Winifritz:

From day to day I have been waiting and waiting and waiting for a word from you to tell

me, among other things, of the judgment passed by Mr. St. Gaudens upon your work. But you have been silent with a persistency worthy of a much better cause. I was very proud of you when the whole population of this settlement, high and low, burst out in a chorus of praise of the bust. You have asked me to repeat to you what Dr. Jacobi had said to me; it was: "This is the best thing of the kind I have ever seen. I am only afraid she will try to improve it and then spoil it—she ought not to touch it again."

And now I want to hear that all this has been confirmed by the highest authority. You should not withhold the report from me for a single day, whatever it be. I am anxious to know what St. Gaudens says of your work. But whatever it may be—you have yourself told me that he is a little whimsical sometimes—do not let anything discourage you. I am sure that your work has great merit, and that you possess talent which will certainly make its mark if you persevere. Persevere then!

Faithfully,
C. Schurz

Art or no art, Edith and I could not forget Italy and its blind boys. From them came the inspiration for starting the Ticket Bureau for the Blind in New York, to give those bereft of sight opportunity, free of cost, to hear the best

music at recitals, concerts, the opera, and to enjoy theatrical performances.

My sister and I were lauded for our kind thoughts; cooperation, even an office to serve as headquarters, was offered. We accepted gratefully, handed over the list of the blind which we had obtained from the school for the blind, and were told that nothing more would be required of us but to await the fruition of our idea. We waited—but nothing happened! We could not understand. It never dawned on us that our idea had been kidnapped and was to be killed by the benevolent and important kind people. There were plenty of good deeds sponsored in New York by important people with full pocketbooks. Why should two women who were unimportant and had only their dress allowances compete with them and push a new idea into an already overcrowded field? The Ticket Bureau, they concluded, had better be kindly and gently suppressed.

We soon realized, however, that the only thing that mattered was what my sister and I had been taught by those happy blind faces at the concert in Italy. Cost what it might, we would do what we could to insure as much joy as possible for as many blind as possible. Little did we guess that resolve would exact a great price: most of our time for many years, plus undreamed of hazards.

Thus it was that we had invitations mailed to all the blind from a list we had obtained. We asked them to call on certain days at certain hours at my brother's house, 44 East 78th Street. Not knowing how many of our guests would be crippled or infirm, as well as blind, we thought it well to avoid the high brownstone stoop.

To our astonishment, 78th Street from Park to Madison Avenue teemed with strange and pathetic humanity long before the appointed time. They ranged from the well-dressed to the unspeakably shabby. Sad-eyed men and women led their charges. Little did we dream what tragedies, what sordid tales we were shortly to hear.

As the hour struck the iron basement gate opened to admit a small group. Two of these, a middle-aged, neat man and a well-mannered woman, took the chairs placed before me. Their story, told by the patient wife, was brief. They were Austrians; he had been a musician in poor health. Then sudden blindness came. They lost everything. With his tragedy he had also lost all hope and interest. During this recital he remained silently wrapped in gloom. The woman hoped that our offer of entertainment might by some miracle arouse him from his lethargy. As I looked at him and tried to get him to speak to me, there seemed little hope. Suddenly, remembering his nationality, I asked him in Austrian

vernacular if he would like a little music. A slow smile spread over his tragic, handsome face as he answered in his native tongue, "Music—I love it." I promised that he should go to a concert where a great artist was to sing German songs. He raised his drooping shoulders and straightened his body with eager attention as he exclaimed, "How is it possible, oh, thank you, thank you."

After my sister welcomed these people in German, their name, address, and all the information about them, including the cause of his blindness, were recorded by the secretary, who also listed what kinds of music they preferred. A middle-aged, low-voiced, pretty woman, neat in a threadbare dress, applied for a chance to use tickets for lectures, the theater, and concerts. Impressed by her personality and her willingness to help us with our work, we asked her to return the following day with the many blind friends she said she knew. This lady was a widow, well-mannered and educated, who later did important work in the organization which grew out of the Ticket Bureau.

A blind giant with the shoulders of an ox held the arm of a puny little man. Both were scrupulously neat, though their clothes showed much wear. The giant had a thatch of dark hair and a puzzled frown on his handsome face, as if he were still puzzled by the blow that had

taken his sight. The little man—obviously a sensitive soul—had still enough vision to act as guide. These men wanted anything we could give that would add interest to their lives, but most of all they wanted work. Ultimately they became our friends and for many years our valued helpers at the Ticket Bureau.

For two crowded hours we listened to more of our guests. Although many still pressed to talk to us, we were forced to ask them to return on the two afternoons still allotted for interviews.

Our secretary gently showed them out, but one electric eel, led by a small boy, slipped by and came quickly to me. Both were pitiable sights—ragged, dirty, pale, and undernourished. The child fixed me with his piercing black eyes. His blind charge of perhaps nineteen, with horrible bulbulous opthalmic eyes set in a lovely clear-cut Roman face, looked straight before him. For a long time (it seemed to me) neither spoke. I broke the silence with, "What do you wish?" No answer. The same question in German and French did no good either. Finally, Italian loosened their tongues.

This first day's operation convinced us that our project was sorely needed. We found that no one in New York knew where the blind were, what their problems or potential usefulness might be. But neither did we know anything concrete about the subject. We merely knew enough to

show that many blind were enchained by hopeless idleness and that we were going to devote our lives to doing something about rescuing them.

In the summer of 1904, Winifred went to England to study work for the blind. At Norwood Institute she found Dr. Campbell, the Principal, a splendid example of what a blind man should and could be. From him she learned much concerning the capacity of the blind to become useful citizens if given the training and opportunity.

Meanwhile, Winifred cabled Edith to go ahead and found an Association for the Blind in New York. Edith got all the printed reports she could of work done for the blind in other states, and went to Boston and Overbrook, Pennsylvania, specifically to find out what was being done and who was doing it. In Cambridge, Mass., she found one of Dr. Campbell's sons enthusiastically carrying out some of his father's ideas. In a beautiful new school at Overbrook, Dr. Edward E. Allen was teaching blind children and training them to be athletes as well. His students, she found, left school fitted to meet the world.

On November 23, 1904, Edith called a meeting of interested friends to explore the possibilities and to set up a committee. It was found that three-fourths of the blind in New York State lost their sight after school age. There was no organization in the State of New York to give

the man or woman stricken a helping hand, while the city merely offered either the poorhouse or a pension of fifty dollars.

It was obvious that the committee had two big tasks before it: (1) Educating the blind to the fact that they were capable of becoming happy and something close to self-sufficient; and (2) Educating the seeing public about the prevention of blindness and the capacity of the blind. These tasks, all agreed, required preaching, teaching, and object lessons.

The committee to organize Lighthouse No. 1, the New York State Association for the Blind, experienced much difficulty in securing its incorporation. The authorities of the State Board of Charities had at that time never heard of the idea of prevention of blindness. It was necessary for me to give a short lecture on the subject before they finally shrugged their shoulders and consented to my quixotic scheme.

Despite the marvelous work accomplished by Dr. Howe, the splendid work done at Overbrook, Pennsylvania, by Dr. Edward E. Allen, and the monumental creation of Sir Francis Campbell at the Royal Normal School for the Blind in London, and much other good work at home and abroad, the blind were still generally considered as objects of charity, best taken care of in institutions and asylums, "where," to quote the words of the great blind man, Sir Henry Fawcett, the

Postmaster General of England under Victoria, "they were walled up and generally treated as a class which could do nothing."

Beggary was distinctly their most remunerative profession and pity their usual lot. It was not surprising that bills were enacted to distribute pensions to the blind, but a peculiarly archaic one was in force in the City of New York when the Lighthouse lit its lamp. All blind people, if they could swear that they were totally blind, or appeared so—there was no examination—could receive fifty dollars pension from the city. On this fifty dollars, of course, they were to live, clothe, and feed themselves until the second fifty dollars arrived the next year.

With the help of Dr. F. Park Lewis of Buffalo and Professor Carstens of Columbia University, my sister took a census on 9,585 cases of blindness throughout the state. These statistics showed why most of the blind were blind, what education they had had, and what they could do. The results were published in the report of the State Commission which I got the Governor to appoint and of which my sister was the active volunteer secretary. Her work started the first Committee for the Prevention of Blindness. In fact, the census furnished the initial data for the first lay work for the prevention of blindness, organized as a committee of the Association, and financed by the Russell Sage Foundation.

For a year and a half our home served as headquarters of The New York State Association for the Blind, Lighthouse No. 1. It was financed on a borrowed \$400 plus our dress allowances. When Mr. Felix Warburg visited our library and saw blind switchboard operators, typists, weavers, etc., he said to me: "Either the blind or you girls must leave this place."

For purposes of stature, the Association badly needed a president. So I went to Lyman Abbot and begged him to accept. "But where is it?" he asked. "Well," I confessed, "It is mostly in my heart and my head, but someday it will be a great organization." "You seem a sincere young woman," he said. "I'll be your president for six months."

Later I took to Albany the draft of a bill making use of prophylactic at birth mandatory. This bill quickly passed both houses and signed by the Governor.

Later, I was asked how the bill went through so quickly and I replied: "If you really must know the secret of my success in Albany, I bought the most becoming hat I could find before I tried to get the Governor to sign the bill."

That bill made neglect to give the prophylactic at birth an offense punishable by fine, or imprisonment, or both. The first year this law was enforced eighty midwives were arrested. After that it became difficult to find offenders. With

Charles Howland, I returned to Albany and asked the Governor to sign the bill creating a State Commission for the Blind. I remember that I insisted on a clause being inserted in the bill making it illegal for anyone holding office, or working for an organization for the blind, to be a member of the commission as long as he held such office.

That clause is why I had to persuade Dr. John Finley, our new president, to resign as president of the New York Association for the Blind and to become the first head of the state commission. I stipulated, however, that should he resign from the Commission, he would promise to again resume the presidency of the Lighthouse were he asked to do so.

As the Association now lacked a president, my secretary and I rushed by train and auto to Stockbridge to see Mr. Joseph H. Choate, one of our first friends and officers. It was a glorious day and I was very anxious to succeed in my important mission. Mr. Choate welcomed us with great kindness as I apologized for intruding on his holiday. Briefly I stated my case: Would Mr. Choate become President of the Lighthouse? Without demur and with unfailing humour he accepted. He asked us to wait for Mrs. Choate and tea, but the timetable made this impossible. So with hearts full of gratitude and joy we left him and returned to our tasks in the city.

Our first public meeting was held in the ball-room of the Waldorf-Astoria on March 29, 1907. Every box in that great room was filled. Dr. Lyman Abbot presided. Mr. Samuel Langhorne Clemens (Mark Twain) spoke at length and said: "It is dismal enough to be blind—it is a dreary, dreary life at best. To them it is always night; and when they have to sit with folded hands and with nothing to do to amuse or entertain or employ their minds, it is drearier and drearier. They ought not be compelled to subsist on charity. We would give them an opportunity to earn their bread and to know the sweetness of the bread got with the labor of one's own hands." The Hon. Joseph H. Choate also made a spirited address, concluding with: "Nobody is as blind as those who won't see. There is need for help, and whatever is done should be done quickly."

At the close of the program, Mr. Clemens read the following letter from Helen Keller, whose illness prevented her keeping her promise to speak in behalf of the need for the Association's work:

My dear Mr. Clemens:

It is a great disappointment to me not to be with you and the other friends who have joined their strength to uplift the blind. The meeting in New York will be the greatest occasion in the

movement which has so long engaged my heart; and I regret keenly not to be present and feel the inspiration of living contact with such an assembly of wit, wisdom, and philanthropy. I should be happy if I could have spelled into my hand the words as they fall from your lips, and receive, even as it is uttered, the eloquence of our newest ambassador to the blind. We have not had such advocates before. My disappointment is softened by the thought that never at any meeting was the right word so sure to be spoken. But, superfluous as all other appeal must seem after you and Mr. Choate have spoken, nevertheless, as I am woman I cannot be silent, and I ask you to read this letter, knowing it will be lifted to eloquence by your kindly voice.

To know what the blind man needs, you who can see must imagine what it is not to see, and you can imagine it more vividly if you remember that before your journey's end you may have to go the dark way yourself. Try to realize what blindness means to those whose joyous activity is stricken to inactivity.

It is to live long, long days, and life is made up of days. It is to live immured, baffled, impotent, all God's world shut out. It is to sit helpless, defrauded, while your spirit strains and tugs at its fetters, and your shoulders ache for the burden they are denied, the rightful burden of labor.

The seeing man goes about his business, confident, and self-dependent. He does his share of the work of the world in mine, in quarry, in factory, in counting-room, asking of others no boon, save the opportunity to do man's part, and to receive the laborer's guerdon. In an instant accident blinds him. The day is blotted out. Night envelops all the visible world. The feet which once bore him to his task with firm and confident stride, stumble and halt, and fear the forward step. He is forced to a new habit of idleness, which like a canker consumes the mind and destroys its beautiful faculties. Memory confronts him with his lighted past. Amid the tangible ruins of his life as it promised to be, he gropes his pitiful way. You have met him on your busy thoroughfares, with faltering feet and outstretched hands, patiently "dredging" the universal dark, holding out for sale his pretty wares, or his cap for your pennies; and this was a man with ambitions and capabilities.

It is because we know that these ambitions and capabilities can be fulfilled that we are working to improve the condition of the adult blind. You cannot bring back the light to the vacant eyes; but you can give a helping hand to the sightless along their dark pilgrimage. You can teach them new skill. For work they once did with the aid of their eyes, you can substitute work they can do with their hands. They ask only opportunity,

and opportunity is a torch in darkness. They crave no charity, no pension, but the satisfaction that comes from lucrative toil, and this satisfaction is the right of every human being.

At your meeting New York will speak its word for the blind, and when New York speaks the world listens. The true message of New York is not the commercial ticking of busy telegraphs, but the mighty utterings of such gatherings as yours. Of late our periodicals have been filled with depressing revelations of great social evils. Querulous critics have pointed to every flaw in our civic structure. We have listened long enough to the pessimists. You once told me you were a pessimist, Mr. Clemens; but great men are usually mistaken about themselves. You are an optimist. If you were not, you would not be at the meeting. For it is an answer to pessimism. It proclaims that the heart and the wisdom of a great city are devoted to the good of mankind, that in this, the busiest city in the world, no cry of distress goes up but receives a compassionate and generous answer. Rejoice that the cause of the blind has been heard in New York; for the day after it shall be heard around the world.

Yours sincerely,
Helen Keller

From this time on Winifred worked ceaselessly to gain the interest of people who could finance the work. The following letter from Mr. Schurz

shows how determined she was:

Augusta, Ga., March 15, 1906

My dear friend Winifritz:

That my—or rather *our*—letter to Cleveland has brought you *only* a letter from him, I regret. But his good words are always worth something. I regret still more that my hope to interest Carnegie in the matter by talking to him has come to nothing, for he will not be here. He could get no hotel accommodations here, the place being full to overflowing, and has gone to the Virginia Hot Springs. I shall not see him until my return to New York, and then I shall do the best I can.

In the meantime, as I see from your missive, you have run into financial liabilities, which are apt to go on increasing, and not being able at present to “tackle” the man who might take them off your shoulders, I ask your permission to send you a modest check to alleviate them a little—hoping that other people will do likewise.

Ever your friend,
C. Schurz

Princeton
Feb. 11, 1906

My dear Miss. Holt:

The New York Association for promoting the interests of the Blind has undertaken a noble

benevolence. The feature of its work that appeals to me strongest is that which contemplates the fitting of the blind by instruction and encouragement for self-support. I know from experience and observation how much can be done in this direction, and how easy it is, in the absence of such effort, for the blind to fall in the way of dwelling upon their deprivations as entitling them to bald and irredeemable charity.

Grover Cleveland

That spring shortly after Mr. Schurz returned to New York, he died. Thousands paid him tribute. For Winifred and Edith, a great light had gone out.

IV

LIGHTHOUSE NO. 1

Busy months and years followed. The Sage Foundation, through Miss Schuyler and Mr. Glenn, enabled the new Association to pay its debts and to rent a house on 59th Street, opposite the present Lighthouse.

Winifred worked arduously to raise money and to make powerful friends whose backing would influence the general public. Concurrently, she developed an ever-deepening understanding of the blind's needs and possibilities.

In 1908 her sister, Edith Holt, married Dr. Joseph Colt Bloodgood and moved to Baltimore, leaving Winifred to carry on the young Association's development. At the time, Winifred wrote:

It was my lot to speak whenever and wherever possible, to show slides of the blind and their work, and exhibits of their handicraft. A notable occasion was at the Hippodrome, where I had to speak into the vastness without a microphone. There, among other demonstrations, blind swimmers from Overbrook rescued scene-shifters from simulated drowning in the large tank.

I spoke various times at the Colony Club, even in pulpits, and in the chancel. So eager was I

to do my best that I asked experts to study and correct my pronunciation, and I always asked someone in the audience to criticize what I said, my voice, my gestures, and my poise. On one occasion I was making a very important speech to a large audience. I told of the achievement of the blind and finally came to the work of the men in the factory. With what art I could muster, I tried first to get the sympathy of my audience and gradually rose to my climax. "Seventy-five of our blind men have manufactured the enormous sum of six brooms." With such authority, however, did I say it that no one realized I had omitted three zeros after the six except my critic on that occasion, Miss Rogers.

Several Public School systems in the West had tried teaching blind children jointly with the sighted and found it so helpful, not only to the blind, but to seeing children in teaching them consideration of their fellow pupils, that we undertook to do likewise in the New York schools. Several principals of blind schools protested and appeared against us at a hearing before the Board of Education, but we won out. That able and devoted City Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Maxwell, wrote:

"It so happens that I am able to bear some definite complete testimony to the good work, the grand work that has been accomplished by the Lighthouse. We commenced, I think, with

some seven or eight blind children, the very first sent to the Public Schools by the Lighthouse, and it is from the Lighthouse that we have ever since derived our inspiration and our example for the work of training the blind children. The influence of the Lighthouse did not end with starting this work in the Public Schools. Ever since the work of the Lighthouse has been progressing, it has been a constant object lesson to those of us who are trying to make perfect the work of training blind children in classes with sighted children. We find that the blind child may learn to do all the sighted child may do, and through work and independence the child gains practically all the natural satisfaction of life. It is for this great work, I think one of the most beautiful pieces of work that has been done in the public school, and for the inception and inspiration and the example of this work, we have to thank the Lighthouse."

The following letter is from Winifred to her co-worker, Daisy Fiske Rogers, who came to her at 78th Street while still a young girl at school completing her secretarial course. Her wonderful understanding of the blind and of Winifred made her an invaluable ally. She has lived and served through calm and rough times, never swerving, and now that Winifred has "found the light," Miss Rogers still illuminates and steers

the newcomers at the Lighthouse. This letter shows that Winifred's body was always weaker than her spirit and also brings out her grasp of detail. She always thought out the work which she had to delegate to others. She kept her hand on the throttle, and knew exactly what the "old ass," as she called the Association, was doing and should do:

Baltimore, Md.
Oct. 31, 1908

Dear Miss Rogers :

Congratulations on starting the looms and engaging a teacher.

Use your own judgment freely in the matter of salaries and machinery, only bear in mind that we are poor.

I have just telegraphed you again to use your own judgment concerning the photograph for the reminiscences. I much prefer the best photograph that can be taken, but you must consider time and feasibility, as I do not wish to lose the chance of having it published. I have no objection, if you have none, to the philanthropic committee's plans. I do not approve, as a rule, of raffling at fairs, as they tend to promote the spirit of gambling. Watch out for this.

If we do not do what our late bookkeeper suggests, he will apply to Massachusetts as an em-

ployee of ours, and get his exhibit from there. Therefore, as the lesser of two evils, please write him civilly "during my absence, etc." and send him a few brooms and whatever else you think necessary, but let his state pay expenses if possible. I agree with you that he is probably looking for a political appointment. I am writing Post & Hall to convene the shop committee, and, if the new quarters at 322 E. 44th Street are satisfactory, rent included, to sub-let the shop and to make the move without delay. Order these things to be done subject to your approval.

Today is the first day that I have not been really ill since I arrived. If you will send me the recent "Valentine Haüy," "The Blind," and "The Outlook for the Blind," also a copy of Mr. Gilder's article on us, and any other literature which may occur to you as helpful, I will write the report here. Please have all data and reports on the Chairman, etc., sent to me, duplicated according to the arrangement of last year's report. Miss Dodge must write her report as chairman of the Auxiliary and I will incorporate Mr. Post's report of the ball in my article. Of course, Dr. Bishop writes as Chairman of the Shop Committee.

I will return if I am needed; otherwise will take a week more here; but it is not necessary to say so to our charges.

Very affectionately yours,
Winifred Holt

The Honorable P. Tecumseh Sherman, member of the first Committee for the Prevention of Blindness reminds me in his report that "Miss Holt attended and addressed the International Conference for the Blind in Manchester, England, in July 1908, as its representative."

My task at the Manchester Conference was a pioneer one and as difficult as it was new. As there was no lay committee in Britain for the prevention of blindness, the public and the medical profession highly objected to my representing a committee of that sort. I was assailed as an immodest woman who did not know her place and who was talking about things which should be discussed solely by doctors. There were a few, however, who saw the wisdom and necessity of the lay movement and who congratulated me on the pioneer effort of the New York Association for the Blind. Among the most sympathetic in my audience was Mr. Wilson, Chairman of Gardeners Trust for the Blind and Chairman of the Manchester Conference. Later, at his suggestion, an English lay committee for the prevention of blindness was formed.

I had worked hard before leaving New York to establish the work there on a firm basis, and its report had been printed and circulated. One morning in London I looked at the sill of my door and saw a tiny corner of an envelope protruding. Opening it, I read in a very fine-pointed hand

this letter :

Dear Miss Holt :

I have read with much interest your report of the New York Association for the Blind. I was particularly interested in what you said of the need for a proper workshop for blind men and that your present shop was unsuitable and even dangerous because of the possibility of fire. I will take much pleasure in giving you a workshop. I shall hope to see you on your return.

Sincerely yours,
Emily H. Bourne

When I returned to America I called on Miss Bourne. She was about as tall as my shoulder, very slender and fragile, with dark, bright eyes and nearly-gray hair. An offspring of a long line of seafaring men, her father was one of the great whalers of his day; in his memory Miss Bourne built a whaling museum in New Bedford. She had a great heart governed by the makeup of her shrewd and frugal forebears.

She asked me pointed questions about my work with the blind and I gave her the information she wished. At that time, although I was very earnest and hardworking, I had a keen sense of the ridiculous and bubbling humor which offended some people. Miss Bourne did not seem to take

to me at this interview, and I left her praying I had not harmed my cause.

At a much later talk with the lady she took my hand and said: "I understand you and like you. You are Fiammetta." "Who was she?" I asked. "Fiammetta, my dear," she replied, "was a little girl very much like you. She went very properly to church but when the service was over, her irrepressible spirits made her turn handsprings down the aisle."

Miss Bourne eventually gave the workshop for the blind which bears her name.*

But England in 1908 was not all work and no play, and among my amusing experiences was that of being wooed both by suffragettes and anti-suffragettes. One day on returning to my London club I found my room filled with lovely flowers and gifts of fruit. I was surprised at these unheralded tokens of good-will. Soon I was told that some ladies were waiting to see me. I descended to the drawing room to meet three utterly strange women ranging from a bright-eyed girl to a gray-haired matron. They beat about the bush with pleasantries for awhile, but finally after confessing that the flowers *et al* had come from

* Miss Bourne's gifts for land and building amounted to \$120,772. The Workshop was subsequently enlarged on two occasions, the entire cost reaching \$390,000. In 1951 the need for a much larger factory required the purchase of a 78,000 square foot building at 36-20 Northern Boulevard, Long Island City, Queens, at a cost of \$465,000, exclusive of alterations and improvements amounting to \$117,000. Orders exceeding \$2,500,000 were filled during 1951.

them, they explained their mission: "We came to see if you would very much mind going to prison for the cause of suffrage." I let them go on for a little while talking of the martyrdom of Mrs. Pankhurst and her daughter. And finally they again asked me to serve their cause. "But I can't possibly," I said. "Don't you understand that I am a philanthropist and to do the utmost good I can't afford the luxury of either politics or creed. I must be all things to all men and women and not be partisan to anything." When they implored me still further, I told them I had work to do—a book to write about an Englishman which involved much research. Finally, still unconvinced of the logic of my position, they left.

The following afternoon I had another and quite unexpected visitor. Would I see Mrs. Humphrey Ward? She was a friend of father's, so of course I consented. She said she had come herself to ask if I would excuse the informality of her inviting me to dinner at her house the following evening. Somewhat astonished at her great cordiality, I accepted.

At the dinner Mrs. Ward attached herself to me and, after polite chatter, observed that she hoped I was interested in the great problems of the day. I gave her my questioning assurance. "I wanted to ask you myself if you would not join our anti-suffrage party." All my vanity disappeared. It was neither me nor my father nor my work which

interested my hostess. Like the heroic women who wanted to have me arrested, she cared solely for her cause. With such tact as I could muster, I explained my policy of neutrality.

Mrs. Ward, however, impressed me anew with the sweetness and simplicity of her personality. She was intensely feminine and modest and I found it difficult to recognize in her make-up the great potentialities of her genius and her capacity to do work often masculine in its rugged strength. She epitomized that contradictory combination of adventurousness and conservatism so characteristic of the Victorian period.

During the summers of 1909 and 1910, Winifred traveled extensively throughout the Scandinavian countries, Germany, and Austria, studying techniques that might be useful to the Lighthouse. Her general impressions, here summarized in two letters to Miss Rogers, show that there was in reality very little to be learned as respects advanced training. But, unexpectedly, Winifred did learn something of great importance—the value of prestige in social work:

Tanenzine Strasse 19, Berlin,
July 19, 1909

Dear Big-heart (Miss Rogers):

I've got a new friend, the wife of the Consul General of Copenhagen — hence these Danish stamps for D.F.R. It's been a very funny trip,

with an uncommon amount of adulation which you know is always welcome to me. The blind investigation — three places including eleven branches — all have been depressing, but the fault has partially been this tired investigator's. Here the blind must make money for their institute; they cannot play or have much diversion because it takes time from moneymaking. I am hoping for better things at Chemnitz, Vienna, and the other places I hope to see. So far I have visited schools at Hamburg and Steglitz.

Tell Mr. Fox that we must have the best museum in the world—the field cries for leadership—but we must get room and money eventually to try our wings with. I've ordered an apparatus to hold chairs to be caned at Berlin. Tell Miss Bingham that I think their Braille slates far the best so far, and that she had best keep two; if she wants to order more, the Board of Education must pay for them. Both sides of the paper can be written on, a great saving in all respects. The small slates are presents that I've bought for myself first, so keep them dark until my return. Have all packages sent by me from time to time kept intact until later. I'll pick up whatever seems worthwhile for the Lighthouse. I hate to bother you with the enclosures, but it is better for you to phone than to trouble my brother. I have had no letters yet and am eagerly waiting your news. I hope that you can have a complete, restful vaca-

tion. Take as much time off as you want whether things are satisfactory or not at 59th Street. Your strength is of greater importance to the blind than efficient management of the "old Ass"* for a couple of months. Much love to you and yours, and greetings to all in the Lighthouse.

Affectionately,
Winifred

Cafe Hohenwald Marienbad
Aug. 4, 1909

Dear D.F.R.:

Yesterday's letter was a great relief. Glad that things are so satisfactory—even discounting the fact that you would always make them put their best feet foremost for me. I can't help being distressed at your putting off your holiday for the census, but I hope that by the time you get this you will be in the fields finding the other Daisy as I am trying to find the other Winifred. Aren't we both curious compound fractions? Well . . . !

I'm terribly keen about my job over here and shall go to Vienna and Prague D.V. Perhaps I'll learn enough by study to know just what we had best do next for the Lighthouse. What did the *Times* do with my letter written on departure? What is the opposition up to?

As usual I am swamped with work: up at 6:30, out at 7:30, return home at 9:30 at night and

* W's affectionate name for the N. Y. Ass'n for the Blind.

tumble exhausted into bed. I can't catch up with my correspondence but there is no use trying to get a new secretary and teach her for such a short time. Will you this autumn try to keep your eyes open for a right hand for me? I can't bear another winter like last, as I shall begin the season by taking charge of my sister's Baltimore work while at the same time trying to devil up New York possibilities, social and otherwise. The more I see of work here the more I see the great need of social pull. That institution on which the King calls is best; where the Queen calls, next best; and so down the scale according to social backing. This is just between ourselves but to me profoundly interesting.

Affectionately,
Winifred

To teach the public what the blind were capable of, Winifred and her committees decided that a great exhibition of work by the blind should be held in the Spring of 1911. To this purpose, Mr. Otto Kahn graciously offered to lend the Metropolitan Opera House for ten days.

To quote from the Association's report of 1911: "It gave the first blind workers' exhibition, opened by the President of the United States (William Howard Taft), where over 200 blind people demonstrated their ability in industries ranging from broom- and boot-making to stenography and wireless telegraphy."

Then, on December 20, 1911, President Taft laid the cornerstone for a new lighthouse. The land bore a \$40,000 mortgage, with some \$50,000 needed to complete and equip the building. But it was not until more than a year later, during which time Winifred labored feverishly to raise the necessary funds, that Lighthouse No. 1 finally moved into permanent quarters.

Like Jacob's toiling for Rachel, I had labored day and night, regardless of obstacles in my road and disregarding the cost to mind and body, for seven years and now my hopes and prayers were realized. My dream had become, as I like to say, concrete and stone. It was Washington's Birthday in 1913. The President of the United States had sailed down the Bay to unveil an Indian monument. In the auditorium of the new Lighthouse a throng seated and standing wherever it could find space eagerly awaited his arrival.

Back of the stage a curtain of midnight blue hung in heavy folds; before it stood a dark massive chair, its high curved back accentuated by a golden-sunburst motif. To its right, amidst a group of distinguished men, sat two women. One older, but still handsome, held the hands of a nervous, eager girl, and as the elder woman spelt words into the hand of the vibrant personality beside her, Helen Keller's vivid imagination, stimulated by Mrs. Macy's silent words, quickly envisioned the scene. Facing these two great

women were Dr. John Finley, then the head of City College of New York; the late Mr. Maxwell, with his remarkable Roman profile and impressive personality; General Roe, a great friend of the blind; and the Honorable Joseph H. Choate, beloved on two continents as ambassador, statesman, and wit. I sat beside the latter, holding in my hand the special typewritten program which I always prepared for his use at public meetings. The blind organist had played and played again, and still the President came not. To fill up the long wait, Mr. Choate said to me: "Put Helen Keller in the President's chair." Immediately I crossed over before the monumental seat, took Helen Keller's hand, and, as she put the fingers of the other one on my lips, I asked her if she would not like to sit in the President's chair. The idea delighted her and quickly I led her to it and she seated herself, each nervous, sensitive, white hand resting on its arms and the golden rays of the sun motif making a halo above her head. With an irresistible smile she leaned forward and in her earnest, appealing voice she said clearly, "I am the first woman to occupy the Presidential chair."

Soon we all rose as the President, preceded by Secret Service men and followed by his staff, was announced. The whole aisle appeared to be nearly filled by our genial executive. Quickly he mounted the steps to the stage and, Helen Keller having vacated his chair and joined her teacher, he was

soon seated in majesty on his ample throne. After the benediction the program opened with an address by President Taft, who said, in part:

“To bring about as near an equality of opportunity for all who are born into this world as can be. That is the reason why we are here, because those of us who are blest with sight feel that those who have not sight have not had as yet a square deal and that it is one’s duty to do it through the state, and through every other agency that modern methods approve. . . . Now we are here to congratulate those whose work it is and those who are to receive the benefits of this our friend, Miss Holt, on having taken a substantial step towards the ideal which we would form of ameliorating the loss of one of the five senses, and helping with the other four to accomplish what other people do with five.”

The intervals of the afternoon had been filled in by the playing of a blind organist, and to a march from the great instrument most of the assembly dispersed. Then, to complete the formal ceremony, the guest book of Lighthouse No. 1 was inscribed by those notables who had helped to make the opening so memorable.*

* On June 15, 1950, a new cornerstone for a new \$650,000 five-story addition was laid by Governor Thomas E. Dewey. Linked with the completely redesigned and re-equipped Lighthouse at 111 East 59th Street, at a cost of \$366,000, the joint structure will afford an ultimate increase in space of 90 per cent. This New Lighthouse was formerly dedicated on April 25, 1951, by former President Herbert Hoover.

V

FUND RAISING

Throughout his career as Governor of New York, Secretary of State, and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Charles Evans Hughes never lost interest in the blind. Armed with this knowledge, I went to him and told of our sore need of funds. With one of his grave smiles he promptly suggested, "Go to the Secretary of the Treasury. Tell him that I sent you and told you to say that he has entirely too much money and must give you some." With gratitude I left him to carry out his order. At the Treasury Building I waved away the obstructing secretaries with the simple statement that I came directly from the Secretary of State with a message for the Secretary of the Treasury. Soon I was in his presence. Mr. Mellon asked me to be seated and waited. "I am a little embarrassed, Mr. Secretary," quoth I, "but the Secretary of State has given me an order and I must obey him." "Go on," he encouraged. "The Secretary of State instructs me to say to you, Mr. Secretary," and then I could not help but smile, "that you have entirely too much money; that I am to say so, and to add that you must please give some for the work of the blind in which he has been interested for a long time." "I will give

you five thousand dollars," said Mr. Mellon. "But I am really not very rich and I can't give you any more." I received the check and departed gratefully.

During this period I fought fatigue following painstakingly the directions of my trainer, conscientiously doing exercises every morning and night. But the difficulty was that I had forty-eight hours' work to accomplish in the twenty-four hour day. Money had to be raised and the work at the Lighthouse had to be done efficiently. I could not refuse an invitation to dinner or to the opera because these presented a chance to sit next to somebody whom I might interest in the blind. Often these festivities proved providential and the next day I would receive a fat check for the Lighthouse.

But money was not the only thing I sought. We badly needed clothes for our wardrobe. One day I had a particularly pathetic request from a Negro in the workshop. Franklin had been experiencing religion and he confessed to me that he wanted to "join the church." Suddenly he fixed his sightless gaze on me, and asked, "Miss, you doesn't happen to have a pair of baptismal pants, does you?" "Certainly," I said, "I will send some to you. The sooner you are baptized the better."

That evening I happened to sit next to that charming and indefatigable citizen, Mr. William

Jay Schiefflin. I told him the story of the baptismal pants which I had promised. "Have you got them yet?" he queried. "No," I said, "I must find them by tomorrow. It is important to encourage his religious bent." "Why, take mine. Take my vest, take my coat, take it all excepting these vest buttons." "Oh, please don't!" I exclaimed. "I really don't mean to beg from you, but I could not resist telling you the story." "Never mind," he reassured me, "you shall have all but the buttons." The next day I received the promised garments.

Thus our wardrobe grew and many thousands of articles are cleaned, pressed, and given away or sold, at a nominal cost, at the Lighthouse every year. A curious thing is that at the insistent request of one of our blind clients, a long glass was placed so that our blind friends could "see" themselves in the mirror. In connection with this I recall a blind friend who was a great dandy, very good looking, and who always shaved before his mirror. He told me frankly that he could not shave without it.

The most astonishing gift in our varied collection came to me in answer to a letter from a person I did not know. On investigation I found that she was the aunt of a long-time friend of mine. Accompanied by my secretary, I went by appointment to the house of this maiden lady who lived in the fashionable part of New York. A

servant ushered me into her presence. She was old, feeble, and nearly blind. She gave me two old fashioned, exquisitely-worked long golden earrings, a golden necklace, and a beautiful tortoise shell comb. "I am sure that you can use these for the blind," she said. I answered, "As I know few very rich blind who can afford them, we will have them auctioned or find a seeing friend who will be able to pay the proper price for them." Then the lady said that she wished to give me her gas bonds, and with that she put into my hand five engraved, green, long pieces of paper. I thanked her profusely and after a very pleasant conversation left. In the dressing room I got pins from the maid and pinned the very prickly bonds inside my gown. Then we went to a drug-store and telephoned to Messrs. Kuhn, Loeb & Co. to ask Mr. Jacob Schiff to receive us. At Mr. Schiff's office I told him our story and then unpinned the prickly things. "Good heavens!" he exclaimed. "Do you know what you have there?" "No," I said. "Our friend said that they were gas bonds but it did not seem exactly courteous to ask her how much they were worth." "Those," said Mr. Schiff, "are five \$5,000 bonds you have been carrying inside your gown."

I think perhaps that what success I have had in money raising has been due largely to my making it a point of trying not to ask for it directly. My effort has always been to make the

giver suggest the giving after I had interested him. My strategy has always been to know as much as possible beforehand about the tastes and likes and interests and foibles of my proposed victim, and then to try by touching on his interest to create a sympathetic atmosphere. As I look back on money raising over a quarter-century, I am surprised at the success which was vouchsafed us. Offhand, I can think of only one failure. This concerned a multi-millionaire who lived also in a fashionable part of New York. She came to the Lighthouse and enjoyed a bout of sympathy and pity for the "blind". She cultivated me and fed me at Lucullan repasts on golden plates. If what the setting of those repasts had cost had been given us, our worries would have been over. But this lady, despite her pity and good-will for the blind or her proffered affection for me, never gave a penny. As I try to analyze it, she was not interested in the blind or in me, but in gratifying her social ambitions through the wealthy people engaged in Lighthouse work.

Of quite a different nature was a very beautiful young woman, Mrs. Lewis Woodruff, who loved and wanted to understand the blind, and who begged me to be her guide. Having gathered enough material for a book from the workers at the Lighthouse, their friends, and the Lighthouse Keeper, Mrs. Woodruff wrote her story, "The Lady of the Lighthouse." Although my family

was afraid that her book might seem like an advertisement of me personally and that there might be an undesirable comeback, the book was nevertheless published in 1913. The author refused royalties and the proceeds of the book brought sorely-needed contributions to the Lighthouse. The book also was adapted for the screen and shown all over the country. A few years later, still young, still beautiful and harassed by suffering and her prolonged illness, Mrs. Woodruff met a tragic death. Shortly afterwards her husband followed her, and in his will he left Lighthouse No. 1 a large sum in memory of his wife.

That same year the Association was honored by a gold medal and diploma for its activities at the National Exhibition of Safety and Sanitation. This gave us a total of seven medals in our seven years' existence. But we also lost during that year three great friends of the blind: Dr. John Shaw Billings, one of our first officers; the Hon. Edward Jones, himself blind, who had pioneered in work for the blind in Binghamton; and Dr. Moon, inventor of the Moon Type, much used by old blind people who find Braille too difficult.

Despite the overwhelming mortgage which hung over our lamp, we were proud to show our Lighthouse, although for lack of funds its swimming pool remained empty. Our own clinic had just been started under the direction of a devoted volunteer doctor who saved much sight. I con-

tinued to edit the Searchlight, a children's magazine in Braille. Our beacon had lit others. The Vermont Lighthouse, which had been started a year before by Miss Elsie Brown and her efficient committee, had finished a census of the blind in Vermont and had already twenty pupils whom they were teaching to read and write and do manual work.

I had it in my heart to write a book for grown-ups about Henry Fawcett, the blind Postmaster General of England. This desire was kindled by the success of the little book which I called "The Blind Postmaster General for All Children Everywhere." It had been printed in English, Esperanto, and other languages and had appeared in Braille, Moon, tactile prints for the blind. It had brought me letters from all over the globe, not only from children, but from grown men who wrote me that the example of a man who had lost his sight at an age when his habits and work were fixed and who had still made a success of his life had brought them new courage and new determination. I invariably answered these letters, saying in sum that if I ever had the time and the strength I would try to write a grownup book about Fawcett. This I hoped to do before Autumn.

An Englishwoman, Miss Beatrice C. Taylor, became my good fairy and offered her services. Together we soon found ourselves seated on a

table land of a minor Alp, where the magnum opus was begun amidst waterfalls and yodeling herdsmen. The official biography had already been written by Leslie Stephens, and although it was a memorable, interesting, and outstanding achievement, it was, alas, out of print. More the reason then for another on Fawcett and his magnificent resolve that "I shall let this make no difference."

I think that I should record that Miss Taylor had no typewriter; that every letter which she wrote came out of her fountain pen and that she kept a copybook in which copies of all my letters were pressed on the prepared sheets and kept. She also preserved through the same process a complete copy of the book which we wrote. In this day of portable noiseless typewriters and carbon sheets, I look back with compassion, as well as with gratitude, for the painstaking work and the fatiguing effort which she offered so freely.

At last the book was actually done, and on donkey back and by foot we descended from our heights and returned to England.

There I reported to Ambassador and Mrs. Page and, as usual, enjoyed their delightful hospitality. One evening after dinner I told Mr. Page that I had, during my lingering fever in the Alps, written a lengthy biography of Fawcett. He asked if he might see it and later returned the manu-

script, with the following note: "Dear Miss Holt: Up and at it. Would predict success."

Finally a letter came from Constable, the publisher. My book had been accepted on excellent terms and I could now go home with some sense of accomplishment behind me.

Shortly after returning to the United States in 1914, Winifred attended the annual Lighthouse fête, during which, to her great surprise, she received the Gold Medal of the National Institute of Social Sciences. In presenting the coveted award, Mr. Finley said:

"In the stead of ex-President Taft and of Dr. Hamilton W. Mabie, the regrettably absent president of this National Institute, which is younger sister to the National Institute of Arts and Letters, I, as one of the vice-presidents, have the honor to bestow the Gold Medal upon Miss Winifred Holt, in recognition of her high service to mankind.

"I think of her as the Queen Isabella of newly discovered worlds. The Spanish queen of that name gave her jewels to aid Columbus in the voyage that was to lead to the discovery of America. Miss Holt has given not only her jewels but herself, her days and years, to help many a sightless one to recover sight and to see America for the first time; and thousands of others, still sightless, to find new worlds undreamed of in the

darkness of their days undistinguished from their nights.

"I have no adequate words with which to appraise her splendid service. Those who, though sightless, have found new worlds, gave her their lasting gratitude. I would not in the slightest diminish their happiness in that possession; but for the sighted, I would say to them that they are still deprived of one of the greatest of pleasures in that they cannot see the face of their best friend—Miss Holt."

At this time I saw Mr. Choate frequently, and he and the other members of the Board put their heads together to see how we could put the work on a firm foundation. In March 1914 Mr. Choate organized a Lighthouse Fund Committee, which approved the following letter:

"The New York Association for the Blind started seven years ago with a debt of \$400, a list of only 500 living blind people, and no home. It has now listed 10,000 names, has been personally in touch with 7,000 blind people, and has three model equipped buildings, a workshop, a training station, information bureau, and sales-room, plus a vacation home. It fills a unique place in the community as a pioneer in sight-saving, mind-saving, life-saving, and money-saving for the blind.

"Through the Lighthouse clinic during one week five cases of blindness were 'cured.' Two of

these were boys formerly in the classes of the public schools; they now work and play with their seeing comrades. Fourteen would-be suicides have been rescued by the Lighthouse and taught to be wage earners. Our Home Teachers paid 4,445 visits to the invalid blind this year. Our blind pupils fill positions with the Edison Company and other large corporations, hospitals, and offices. Twenty-six blind people are on our staff. The original of this letter was dictated to one of our blind stenographers and written by her.

“Last year \$23,213 was received from the sale of products manufactured by our blind workers and pupils; in the same period the Lighthouse paid out about \$27,000 to the blind in wages and relief. Some of our pupils who have become independent through our teachings are now themselves contributing to the support of the Lighthouse work.

“Hampered with a mortgage of \$35,000 on the Lighthouse, and lacking money for its running expenses, the Association’s activities must be curtailed or stopped unless \$300,000 are immediately raised. \$51,000 of this sum has already been pledged, conditional on the remainder being speedily found.

“For this purpose a Committee of one hundred is in process of formation to solicit funds through the press, and through individual endeavor.

Contributions of any kind to raise the financial cloud from the Lighthouse, to stop blindness, and to help the blind to help themselves are earnestly solicited.

“Checks are payable to Mr. John Seeley Ward, Treasurer of the Lighthouse Fund Committee, at the Lighthouse, 111 East 59th Street.

Joseph H. Choate
President”

For seven years I had largely carried the terrific burden and responsibility of the Lighthouse on my shoulders. My sister's initial interest and magnificent work for it had started the work of prevention as well as the work for the blind. But her two-year-old son, the apple of my eye, and her wee daughter, my namesake, to say nothing of her indomitable and selfless husband, Dr. Bloodgood, filled her life with exacting and happy responsibility. Mrs. Edward Hewitt, who had been our mainstay and support in the early days and to whom the blind will always be indebted, had withdrawn from our Executive Committee to free herself in developing the Women's Municipal League. The Lighthouse workers were a strong and friendly body. Not one of its members refused responsibility, but many were new to the work and the work itself had to be developed by leaps and bounds in order to fulfill its mission. I was like a child holding on to a kite which is

too big for it. With all my soul I tried to hang on and to do my task, but the constant drafts on my brain and heart were telling on my body and I was completely tired out. Finally my sister insisted that I return to Baltimore with her. When I got there a very bad grippe developed and it was evident that it would take me some time to recover.

During this period of illness I received an invitation to represent the United States as a delegate to the International Conference for the Blind. As it would not be possible for me to represent our country officially without an Act of Congress, President Wilson was kind enough to send me a letter which overcame this difficulty. At the moment, however, I was bedridden and more concerned about being away from New York.

Following is a letter from Edith's husband, Dr. Bloodgood.

Baltimore, Maryland
May 5, 1914

Dear Mr. Choate:

I seem to be between the devil and the deep sea in regards to Miss Holt. She is by no means well enough to return to New York. Yet, it is almost impossible for me to keep her here, because she seems to think that her continued absence will result in a failure to raise the money for the endowment fund.

No doubt you remember that Grant was ill and suffering intensely from headaches just before he received Lee's note of surrender. Grant writes he never felt so ill in his life, yet twenty seconds after he read the letter the headache disappeared.

Now, if you will tell the Committee that if they can send a telegram to Miss Holt that the money has been raised, it will have the same wonderful psychic effect as Lee's note to Grant.

Very sincerely yours,
Jos. C. Bloodgood

8 East 63d St.
May 11, 1914

My dear Miss Winifred,

Worry no more, and get well as fast as you can!

The money is sure to come. We are already assured of \$218,000 conditioned upon the \$300,000 being raised. I ought to receive a letter from Dr. Pritchett telling me that at a meeting of the Executive Committee held on Friday a vote was passed authorizing the treasurer of the Carnegie Corporation to turn over to the New York Association for the Blind the sum of \$100,000 as a part of a sum of \$300,000 which the Association is endeavoring to raise — and that in accordance with conditions generally imposed on Mr. Carnegie's gifts this is to be paid when the \$200,000 has been raised and that I will get a formal letter from Mr. Bertram, the secretary, in a few days.

Until that is received we are not publishing the source of the gift. But on the strength of the fact, I am issuing a letter to all the members of the Committee of 100 who have not subscribed stating that we are now assured of \$218,000 for the Lighthouse Fund, conditions, etc., and asking them to make as liberal a contribution to the fund as they can, so that we may get in all the money by the first of June.

So you may go to sleep and not think of it any more.

Yours most truly,
Joseph H. Choate

As I recovered slowly I was permitted to dictate my paper for the conference in England, and, as requested, to send an advance copy to the honorary chairman of the conference and to Miss Taylor, who was honorary chairman of the hospitality committee, which had the enormous task before it of seeing to the well-being of representatives from, I think, some thirty-eight countries.

VI

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR THE BLIND

By assiduous work, Miss Rogers and my other co-workers at the Lighthouse had assembled a remarkable exhibition both of work done by our blind and of inventions helpful to them. This precious collection was placed on the ship with my other luggage.

Then my dear brother put me aboard the steamer bound for London, where Edith had arranged for a delightful room with a big bay window overlooking the green. Meanwhile, Miss Taylor had engaged for me a very charming secretary, so that on my arrival I found willing hands and brains to make me comfortable. She also had arranged for the big-wigs of the departmental committee of the exhibition to come to me for tea.

Two friends, Mrs. Fisher and Miss Evans, volunteered to help me with the American exhibit, and soon it was installed in Westminster Hall. It was quite as good as any of the other shows, for our display contained some unique and beautiful weaving with which I knew nothing else could compare. We were very glad and proud also to have under our wing an exhibit kindly gathered through the good offices of the City Superinten-

dent of Public Schools, Dr. Maxwell. This display showed vividly the fine achievement of the blind children in the Public Schools of New York and the remarkable work initiated by the tireless efforts of their great friend and teacher, Miss Gertrude Bingham. It was my privilege to represent, in addition to our own work, the Board of Education of New York, and the Brooklyn Bureau of Charities.

This accomplished, I went to see the Pages and presented Mr. Choate's letter:

Stockbridge, Mass.

June 2, 1914

My dear Ambassador,

I take the greatest pleasure in presenting to you and Mrs. Page my friend Miss Winifred Holt, who is not merely the Secretary of the New York Association for the Blind, but, I might truly say, its creator. I believe that you know her father, Henry Holt, the publisher, very well.

In the last ten years she has done immense and most effective work for the blind and knows all about that problem in America. She goes to England to attend the International Conference for the Blind, to be held in London sometime in the last half of this month.

I should like very much to have her presented, if that is possible and there is a Court while she is in London. I know that the suggestion comes

very late, but she has been very ill for the last month, and I really did not expect that she would be able to go.

She has various engagements about the blind in England, in whose behalf I see that great interest has lately been aroused. I cordially commend her to your kindness, and if you can find any means of facilitating her work in London, I shall be greatly obliged, as I am myself greatly interested in the welfare of these unfortunates, and am the president of her association.

With kindest regards to Mrs. Page, I am

Most truly yours,

Joseph H. Choate

I believe that it was on the morning when I was to speak that Mr. Page himself took me to the first meeting of the conference. With his un-failing tact he said just the right thing to make everybody happy about their share in the conference and the exhibition. Then he said a few words about the work which I represented and concluded by reading the letter which I had taken to him from President Wilson:

The White House

Washington, May 13, 1914

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

Miss Winifred Holt, who is the daughter of Henry Holt, the New York publisher, and who will hand you this letter, has been appointed by

some organization interested in the blind as a delegate to represent it in the International Conference on Matters Relating to the Blind which will be held in London from the 18th to the 24th of June next.

Miss Holt has taken a great interest in the blind and was a promoter of the Lighthouse, an institution in New York devoted to the service of this unfortunate class.

We have a law which prevents the executive from making appointments to international conferences of this character without special authority of Congress, and while, in the absence of such authority, we are unable to appoint delegates on part of the United States, I should be very glad if you could informally say to the president of the conference that we are in entire sympathy with the humanitarian object of the conference and that Miss Holt bears the conference the best wishes of myself and the people of this country.

Sincerely yours,
Woodrow Wilson

Then, extricating himself gracefully from the large assembly, the ambassador withdrew. Just before I gave my paper, entitled "Sight Saving and Light Through Work for the Blind," a card was brought to me which read: "Mr. Arthur Pearson." Underneath was written, "May I answer your speech?" I asked the chairman of

the meeting, near whom I sat, who Mr. Pearson was. I was told that he was a writer and editor in the process of going blind and that while he had no official part in the program it would be very kind of me to grant his request. So I did. Despite my feeling quite wobbly, I was told that my talk was very satisfactory.

The congress lasted, I think, for a full week, after which I appeared before the departmental committee of the blind appointed by the House of Commons. The points which I eagerly pressed were: the need of placing the blind child side by side in the work and play of the sighted child; the vital importance in the training of children and adults of considering their individual tastes and aptitudes; the fatal mistake of walling them up in institutions and asylums; and the need of placing them in positions in the world so that they could take honorable and useful places in the work and play of the seeing. My extensive testimony was solemnly published in the British Blue Book and duly figured in the Parliamentary discussion on the welfare of the blind. The Lighthouse exhibit supplemented the testimony of its founder. Although I tried to make my talk very brief, the committee kept me, for what seemed to me an age, asking questions and getting answers.

A month after I had given my paper at the conference, Dr. Bloodgood had promised to give

a paper on thyroids, which he seemed to know more about than anybody else, at the meeting of the British Medical Association. The fact that my sister would soon come with him made me tingle with joy. I hunted high and low for comfortable and reasonable lodgings and discovered that these could be best had at the Westminster Palace Hotel on Victoria Street. Here, in July, I gleefully installed my sister and her husband.

My brother-in-law comes from the West and at that time did not conceal the vibrant voice which God had given him. In London my sister and I felt that this would not do, so we tried to temper his voice to the British key. Fortunately, he was an inimitable mimic. When he finally gave his address out came the low, well-modulated tone that one is accustomed to in the English drawing room. An American doctor, a friend of his, sat next to me and as my brother-in-law proceeded and someone from the back of the hall called out "Louder!" my neighbor murmured under his breath, "Overtrained, overtrained."

But London fortunately was not all conferences and speech-making; and many people entertained lavishly. At Lady St. Helier's dinner I had my first glimpse of Winston Churchill and his charming wife. Also present on this occasion was a member of the German royal family. It was early in the season when we had no idea of the horror then brewing.

A few days later I happened to be lunching at the Savoy. As I entered the lobby, I noticed the same young German nobleman. His face was flushed, his eyes bloodshot, and his whole expression emanated distress. He sputtered a few words of German to a man accompanying him and then they both rushed out. I thought no more about it, but opening my paper the next morning I was shocked to read that Germany had invaded Belgium.

We remained in suspense the next two days; the evening of the third we walked towards Buckingham Palace. A great throng filled all the space before it. The sound of great cheering died away as we found a place near the statue of Queen Victoria. Our neighbor turned and said that England was going to war and that the King had just made the announcement from the balcony facing the square.

Slowly the crowd dispersed and we turned homeward through Downing Street. As we passed No. 10, the door opened and Winston Churchill, top-hatted and in evening dress, emerged whistling gaily. When he had passed, I said to Dr. Bloodgood: "Is anyone who whistles on this night fit to govern?" To which he replied: "Would anyone who couldn't whistle on this night be fit to govern?"

Everyone in London at that time was, I believe, eager to lend a hand. There was much work to

be done, and part of it came to me in various forms. I was soon given an interpreter's badge and asked to help foreigners and refugees. My sitting room verily became an office where all kinds of demands were made at any time of day. Here are some examples of the kind of thing I was supposed to deal with: "The War Refugee General Committee — Dear Miss Holt: I have found a very nice young lady for the Misses Phibbs. Should you like to see her at your club? (The Misses Phibbs were as particular as they were charitable and none of my previous Belgian applicants had seemed fitted for their perfect home.) What has become of your two young men? Could you let me have all the details about the cottage, where it is, if they want nice people or peasants? Have you not a little flat or small house in London for a very nice family with three nice children?"

In the midst of this hectic activity a letter arrived from Mr. Herbert Satterlee, then Commissioner on the First Commission for the Blind, who now urged me very strongly to become a Commissioner in his stead. This brought home to me the realization that, at present, I was more needed by the blind at home than by European refugees.

VII

MEN BLINDED IN BATTLE

America and the Lighthouse looked wonderful to me. I found that the indefatigable Miss Rogers, who had taken my place at the Lighthouse, had helped the work to forge ahead and to develop. The Searchlight now was edited by her and a blind friend. Each department of Lighthouse activity was growing and improving.

Not long after my return, Mrs. Cooper Hewitt and a friend visited the Lighthouse and I had the pleasure of showing them the work. When I gave them tea in my office, Mrs. Hewitt said: "You know that you are really needed in France. I have been there. My house is turned into a hospital for Belgian soldiers. I saw the war blind, a more pathetic group in the hospital in Paris. They were given every possible comfort and were pitied. The Sisters wept over them, the visitors brought them flowers, but there they sat hopeless and idle. Why can't you go to France? They need you over there." "Of course I want to go," I replied. "How can we manage it?"

Later Mrs. Hewitt and I composed a telegram to Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss, whose husband, I think, was the Counselor at the Paris Embassy. The telegram asked if I could be of service to the

war blind of France. Immediately, the answer came back that I could.

The first time that I was able to talk freely with Mr. Choate (he had been working feverishly to bring up to date and perfect the organization's legal and official machinery) I poured out my heart to him about the war suffering I had seen. I told him that I felt it my duty to help the Allies and that with all my soul I yearned to help the French blind. "What is the use," I asked, "of my speaking glibly four languages, of having learned to read Braille with bound eyes, and to see things from the blind man's point of view unless I can now offer the expert knowledge which I possess?" Mr. Choate said that I was much needed at the Lighthouse and that he did not see how it could get along without me. Again I put my point before him and finally, giving me his hand, he relented: "Winifred, you are right. I think that you have earned the right to do whatever you want to and I will help you."

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Albany, New York
April 27, 1915

Dear Mr. Choate:

I am convinced that the power which presides over the terrestrial powers would have us do what

has come into Miss Holt's mind, and I hope that other minds will find themselves compelled to give the \$14,000 which will make it possible for her to be released for this mission.

I think we could not spare her long, but an absence in such a cause for two or three months would make the light here shine more beneficently.

Sincerely yours,
John Finley

It was decided that I was to sail as soon as possible. My sister and I went to see M. Jusserand, then French Ambassador to the United States. He and Madame Jusserand received us cordially. We explained what I wished to do and asked his opinion; both were enthusiastic about the idea of my mission. M. Jusserand combined his anxiety and grief for his warring compatriots with an irresistible humor. In his quizzical fashion he asked, "You are prepared to be torpedoed?" "Perfectly," I replied, "I have a sea blue wrapper." "Perfect. In the sea blue wrapper you will sit on top of the periscope." He then thanked me for what I wanted to do for his compatriots and said that he would facilitate my receiving the necessary papers. He was as good as his word, and on June 19, 1915, we hastily packed and set sail.

Arriving at Bordeaux after an uneventful voyage, my secretary and I went immediately on a

tour of the hospitals of that region, where I gave lessons on a raised checker board with distinctive square and round men. During one of them, I played the game with a young lieutenant who had been blinded in Belgium and taken prisoner by the Germans. The game interested all the blind group—there must have been about twelve—and they accepted with joy cards marked in Braille and dominoes with raised numbers. No one had told these blind patriots that there was any future for them despite their blindness. My stories of the men who had overcome a similar handicap and were now leading happy, useful lives astonished them. I also emphasized that they were still soldiers with their biggest fight before them and that their victories were assured if they brought determination and humor to their task. "Ah, we are still soldiers. Good," they said. And they sat up square and soldierly and breathed fresh life into their lungs.

Dr. Le Grange, the world-famous oculist, gave me the census of the blind in the Sud-Ouest, and sent us to see Abbé Moureau, who had a little shop of his own for blind brush makers and basket workers. The Abbé, tall stalwart and handsome, with gray hair around his tonsure, was a great and selfless personality, but his little industry was on the point of collapse for lack of funds. A naturalist, he had made a beautiful collection of butterflies which, we learned to our chagrin,

he had already sold in order to buy brush and willow for his workers.

A meeting was called at which we told of our work in New York and of our ambition to create similar opportunities for the blind of France. In brief, we put our case so convincingly that the Abbé Moureau and his friends formed a Committee for the Lighthouse of Bordeaux. We, in turn, gave the Abbé enough money to keep his work going for the present. The newly-formed committee at once agreed to help in taking over the education of the blind soldiers of Bordeaux. Abbé Moureau's Association was reorganized so that it could accept blind soldiers, and Dr. Le Grange agreed to act as oculist for the Phare de Bordeaux. Dr. Menier became its first surgeon. M. de Mele, who was an extraordinarily good business manager, and to whom was due the remarkable efficiency of the first hospital which we visited, offered to take up the business problems of the new Lighthouse. The government offered to give food and clothes. To me all this seemed too good to be true.

My joy was complete when I realized that only three days after our arrival in France a constructive piece of work had been accomplished which would solve the tragedy of the Sud-Ouest blind. It was agreed that the "Phare de Bordeaux pour les Soldats et Matelots Aveugles de la

Guerre" would accept any suitable Allied blind from the district.

Charmed by the new French friends we had made and grateful that we had been permitted to serve, we arrived the next day in Paris. The following morning Mr. Carroll telephoned asking me to appear at the Clearing House that same afternoon. Accompanied by my aide I did so, and there distributed letters of introduction. About twenty men were convened around a great table in the big committee room under the chairmanship of M. Gabriel Hanotaux de l'Academie Française. Everyone promptly rose and M. Hanotaux read our letter of introduction from their ambassador, M. Jusserand. Then I was asked to state why I had come to France. This I did in French, adding the story of the creation of the Bordeaux Lighthouse. The chairman thanked me officially, and after the meeting many of those present were introduced and spoke with me. Among them were Mr. Whitney Warren, Dr. Watson, the pastor of the American Church, and M. Baidoum, First President of the Cour de Cassation.

In one of my first letters home I wrote: "I shall probably soon open a lighthouse. There is at present probably not a shorthand machine in France, nor a free training station for the blind. With the cooperation of the government and everybody else opportunities for unlimited service are before

me. What I can do depends entirely on the money to be at my disposal. Also, persons with hearts and intelligence are essential for this job. So far the only one I can count on has the soul of a fly, although her mentality is excellent. Have you ever thought what the soul of a fly is like? Let your imagination loose. I must have someone with money who has done lighthouse work and realizes that he who is first among you is the servant to all.

"I will always cable you when things are urgent and please realize that expedition is necessary in wartime as it takes every effort to get anything across. You understand better than anyone how I feel about this great opportunity of service. Curtail, beg, steal, do anything, but let me stay over here and help. Then, too, I must go to Italy after I have organized work here. We will help in one of the most vital needs in this war for civilization. We can only do this if you make my stay possible."

Awake and planning at six o'clock in the morning, though officially beginning work at eight-thirty, I usually kept at my labors until past midnight, scheming, devising, pulling wires, interesting new people, explaining what work for the blind was and should be, evolving and creating new ways of teaching and helping.

At the Hotel de Crillon, the manager, M. d'Iquis, generously permitted us to use the Salon

des Aigles when it was not in use for official entertaining. Finally a Committee for the French Lighthouse was formed. Among its original members were Mrs. Bliss, Herman Harjes, Mr. Peixnotto, whose cousins had been friends of ours in America, and M. Louis de Vogué.

In America Winifred's co-workers had decided that the Lighthouse in New York should continue to work as an entirely separate entity. The Committee for Men Blinded in Battle was formed to care for the new activities for the blind abroad. President Taft extended his patronage to this new committee and the Hon. Joseph H. Choate became its President with a splendid corps of workers under him. The Lighthouse gave the committee office space.

In France—Le Comité Franco-American pour les Aveugles de la Guerre—became the directing force under the patronage of the President of the Republic, followed by an impressive list of ambassadors, Ministers etc., etc. Winifred was appointed President of the French committee with able and influential workers under her.

Hotel de Crillon
July 9, 1915

Dear Mr. Choate:

I know you will be happy to learn that your letting me come over here has been an unspeak-

able boon to the poor men blinded in battle. While the government reports officially 1800, I have been told unofficially by public officials that there are actually about 20,000 men who have lost their sight. These poor souls remain hopeless and desperate in hospitals.

We have already founded one Lighthouse—"Le Phare de Bordeaux"—for the blind men whom I found there in the hospitals. We were able to reorganize a little organization which existed there without funds but with a most able, intelligent director, l'Abbé Moureau.

The government and thus far everybody whom I have met is enthusiastic about our mission and eager for our aid. If we had a million dollars—this is no exaggeration—we could change the entire situation for the blind of France. We can alleviate it with a little sum at our disposal. Any money, therefore, which you can get will be more than welcome.

In the hospital the other day I found a desperate young officer who had been there for months. He had lost both eyes and his left arm. His right one had been horribly mutilated, but two fingers still remained. I talked to him of the Lighthouse and of the horizon of the educated blind man, and pointed out to him that on his mutilated right arm he still had two eyes—his two remaining fingers—with which to play games and to read. He smiled, for the first time I believe

since his accident; and said: "Mais oui—I may then still be useful."

There is literally nothing being done in the hospitals for the blind men. I am now organizing a corps of able teachers to take them light while they are still in physical incompetence and mental misery. Tomorrow I go to state my case before the Cour de Cassation, and have already the sympathetic ear of the Department of the Interior and the War Office. The government is giving us Frs. 2.50 a day for the food of our men in the Bordeaux Lighthouse.

I can never be sufficiently grateful that we have the privilege of helping here, but I beseech you to let it keep on. They will soon need us more in Italy than they do here.

Gratefully and faithfully yours,
Winifred Holt

Hotel de Crillon
July 29, 1915

Mrs. Peter Cooper Hewitt, Secretary
The Committee for Men Blinded in Battle
111 East 59th Street
New York, U. S. A.

Dear Mrs. Hewitt:

It is very encouraging to receive your weekly report of meetings.

You will be glad to know that my interviews with the War Department have been highly suc-

cessful. We have even been offered a motor and all the cooperation which I sought. Nothing stands in our way now but lack of certainty of sufficient funds to do our work on the proper scale. We are going today to three new hospitals to round up more blind men.

The War Department treats us like its long lost and much desired infant. Nothing is too good for us. We can claim blind men wherever we please. This will probably mean that I start on a tour through France in my military motor before long. Dr. Carrel wants me to go to Comprégné. My time is naturally very crowded and physical limitations prevent my doing more or writing more.

We are having classes each morning in the hotel, teaching each day in the hospitals, training a corps of sighted aides, seeing diplomats and still, alas playing politics.

I am still waiting for the official census before deciding on our plans, though the Department of the Interior has offered a choice of several buildings. I do not want to have too small or too large a place, as we must not spend a penny more for light or service than is necessary, and yet I hesitate to be in a place where we cannot grow sufficiently. We are now trying to get the Maison Royale, Rue Royale, formerly Durants, for our shop and a nearby hotel for a hostel for officers and soldiers.

Please do what you can to arrange home affairs and finance so I will not be recalled. I feel I should be allowed to stay here as long as it is necessary to do for the other Allies what we have undertaken in France.

Sincerely yours,
Winifred Holt

Hotel de Crillon
Place de la Concorde
Paris
Aug. 9, 1915

Roland Holt, Esq.,
34 West 33rd Street
New York, N. Y.

Very dear Buz:

Thank you for your generous gifts and sweet letters. It is just such proofs of affection and kindness that make it possible to carry on the strenuous existence which is my lot at present. I appreciate your generosity in telling me not to attempt to write letters, but just to use postals, and you may expect treatment of this kind for awhile.

I am about to take a trip south to Lyons, Macon, Marseilles, etc., with a secretary and Mr. Lindley, Blanche Underwood's friend, who has

come over here with his motor to help. The War Office is giving me passes and I expect to have a very interesting time. Of course, you realize that I shall not be near the fighting at any time.

I should not be writing this, so goodbye, and dear love to you all,

From your devoted,
G. G.

Hotel de Crillon
Sept. 3, 1915

Dear Mrs. Hewitt:

I turned in here at half past two o'clock on Monday morning, having left Hell for Heaven, as Dante did, and turned a capriolo (somersault) in order to get to the upper regions. The Minister of War had been most kind in preparing our journey for us, and giving us railroad passes and all the other documents necessary to make our trip easy. I took with me Mr. Lindley, as aide-de-camp, and Mademoiselle Impay, as bilingual secretary and teacher. You would have been amused if you had seen your representatives starting on the quest—Mr. Lindley, dressed in a brown uniform, all three of us wearing our brassards stamped by the War office. They are white, with a Red Cross surmounted by a Lighthouse, from which issue three searchlights, for Liberté, Egalité, and Fraternité for the blind.

At Lyons, our first stop was to visit the Maire, M. Herriot, who is also Senator for the Rhone Department. He is an unusually intelligent, competent, and imaginative person. He put his motor and various aids at our disposal, and we soon were in touch both with the blind and the people best qualified to help. We found the Prefect full of the spirit of cooperation, and he immediately addressed a letter to all the Prefects of the Rhone, asking them to help us to find the blind. The Chef du Service de Santé and the Red Cross heads all turned in to lend a hand. The result was that after three days' very hard work we had located the blind of Lyons and the neighborhood, and had asked four blind men to come to Paris.

At Toulon we came to the lowest circle of Hell, where the poor damned blind spirits wait uncomplaining without hope, without courage. We climbed a hill to the Hospital de Ste. Anne. The sun beat mercilessly on the clay ground, barren except for a few stunted palms. Four blind remnants were brought out to us in the radiating heat. I spare you the description in detail of what we were forced to look at. Enough that some had no faces, and one had no hands. Still from the group, five in all which we found there, there was one brave man, formerly a chemist, whom we asked to come to Paris. He cannot sleep yet, and there is not very much left, but his desire to work his way out from darkness to light.

We then took a steam launch and went to the Isle of San Mandride. There were many men-of-war in the deep blue, unruffled harbor. Our little craft was halted before a huge grey battleship, where we presented our various papers. The Marquis, dressed in white uniform and silver, was very gallant, and Mr. Lindley in his more than six foot of khaki, was equally impressive. I of course wore many medals and tried to look official! We passed the battleship and arrived at the hospital, where we were received in state. In the office the telephone man announced, "Madame la Présidente has arrived." I might have been Madame Poincaré with suite, or anybody else! It was very funny. Soon the officials came and we found our poor blind men. They were still rather stunned and a little vague, but through the mists of suffering and blindness I discerned a still strong intelligence in one of them, well worth trying to give a future to.

We had a funny, hectic time catching our train back to Marseilles, and left for Paris the following morning.

Since my return I have been so busy that I have not even had time to look up at the aeroplanes when I hear them clattering above my head. Three hostile aircraft tried to get to Paris the other day, but were turned back, one being destroyed.

With kind greetings and appreciation to you and the Committee, I am, Madam Secretary,

Sincerely yours,
Winifred Holt

Oct. 4, 1915

Beloved Buz:

The plot here thickens. The government, the blind, and even the private institutions are beginning to look to us to solve their problem. This means that probably before you get this letter we will have moved into our two donated buildings. It is as if we should open the Lighthouse and the factory over again. Of course, it is historic help which you, of all people, will be glad to have us give.

To send you some gossip—I lunched the other day with a Prince, a Princess, and a Duchess. My life is spent between potentates, cooks, ministers, and a hectic struggle to get through my correspondence and to do my job. The French translation of my book will be called “*La Carriere d’un Aveugle—Henry Fawcett, Ministre des Postes en Angle-terre*,” and cannot go into French until I have read it; all of which will explain to you that I love you just as much, and a great deal more, than before I began to know Frenchmen so well, but I simply have no time.

Would you mind sending me something in the

nature of a passbook? I have about \$1,200 left on my letter of credit, but I have no idea how my finances stand. I would like a little book and a typewritten statement of exactly how much I have in the Fifth Avenue Bank and the Metropolitan Bank. You see, I have not time to look through family letters to find various paragraphs in which financial statements occur. I have not even time to read my letters sometimes for days, though I always read yours. You will understand. Please help speedily, lest I go to the poorhouse for lack of knowledge of how poor I am!

Love,
Winifred

Oct. 25, 1915

Confidential to Mr. Choate

Dear and honored Chief:

Our First Executive Committee meeting was held on August 4th last, and now, after two months and a half, we have just been officially given the palace at 3 Square Lamartine, which used to belong to the Princesse de Colloredo-Mannsfeld. In this time, we have taken by letter the census of the blind in France, started our teaching in the hospitals, secured four ministers

on our Committee, and have secured our beautiful house free of all costs.

I am now going to turn over a page, and write you a less private part of the letter, which perhaps you may turn into gold for our blind heroes. We need every cent that we can get. We will have about fifty beds in our house, and we shall probably from outside have fifty more blind for our classes. We are to have only one building for the present, as bureau, salesroom, and lodging house. This, of course, will economize enormously in administrative expenses, etc. It will cost us about six francs a day per man, and we cannot count on the government subsidy of Frs. 2.50 per day for all of our men. Moreover, transportation and machinery is terrifically expensive. There is no use in our trying to re-educate the men unless we really give them means of self-support. We are starting a very important experiment, financed in part by the Viscountess de Ganne. This is our knitting department, to be run by the mother of a blind boy who recently died. Her whole heart is in making the work succeed, as a memorial to her son.

I am hoping that what I have indicated of the nature of our work, and of the proportions which it has assumed and which increase daily will make you appreciate the need of my staying here. The home crew, headed by Miss Rogers, is competent; I know that you can depend on the home

Lighthouse work not deteriorating because I am away.

It would be a great satisfaction if I could have even a postal card saying how you are. You would be glad if you knew what strength and happiness your speech at the Pilgrims gave us. It was so good to have you come out fearlessly on the side of right and justice. We over here would be happier if the government would do so, if not with arms, by protest.

With all kind greetings to you and Mrs. Choate,

Affectionately yours,
Gardienne du Phare de France

Hotel de Crillon
Dec. 21, 1915

Confidential to Mr. Choate

Beloved and Honored Chief:

A letter from Mr. Bliss tells me that he saw you, and somewhat clarified our position to you.

Sequestered buildings are doubtful blessings. The government has given us ours for the third time, but after bestowing it according to the enclosed letters, it has menaced us with the possible demand after the war of a limitless indemnity. The knowledge of this only came a little while ago. I have taken the question up with the Ambassador and with our lawyer. If we can be so safeguarded as to make the taking of the house

a proper thing we will do so. Meanwhile, I am quietly pulling a great many strings to get a house which is occupied at present, but which I think the Parisian authorities will yield. For reasons which will be obvious to your diplomatic acumen, I am making this effort by my "wild lone." Mrs. Hewitt has not yet arrived, but when she does I hope to put the matter clearly before her, and trust that she will help me to act quickly.

Winifred

Dec. 16, 1915

D. D. (dear Dad) :

A Happy Christmas and Bright New Year and your own personal New Year. I shall not be with you in the flesh for your birthday, but you know how in the spirit I shall be wishing you joy . . . I have just promised to give my first conference in French, together with a doctor of the Académie de Médecine, and am planning to speak several times during the coming year. I must stop now as I have havered as much as my conscience feels I have a right to do.

There is a book brewing in my brain, and if I ever have time it will be written, and you will laugh as you read it. It will incidentally be useful to a large number of our fellow citizens.

With much love and every good wish, I am

Your devoted daughter,

Winifred

Hotel Crillon
Feb. 3, 1916

Dear Mr. Choate:

Nothing but the combination of writing the Lighthouse 9th report, the visits of Zeppelins, the falling of bombs, and my complete complicity with grippe microbes could have prevented my sending you a prompt birthday letter.

Mrs. Hewitt and I have been so often disappointed that we hardly dare to believe that the Paris Lighthouse is actually ours, but it looks as if the difficult problem of the building for the Phare de France has been settled. If we have actually got the Pope's building with 44 rooms and two gardens, No. 14, Rue Daru, we are far better off than if we had secured the beautiful building which the government originally offered us. It was the hand of Providence which made this house available, when the only other one which would have suited our purpose became utterly impossible. It is not an easy thing to house all our proposed work in one building. Our problem is not the simple Lighthouse one; we must run a lodging-house in conjunction with our educational work.

Each day brings us interesting cases of blindness which we are usually able to help. Despite our long delay in getting housed, I want you and the rest of the committee to appreciate how much

light we have already been able to give to the war blind.

Faithfully,
Winifred

Place Vendôme
Feb. 6, 1916

Dear Mr. Choate:

Your nice long letter reached me two days ago. When this reaches you I hope everything will be working smoothly and that we will be already in our house—14 Rue Daru—the one that I wrote you about that belongs to the Pope.

The answer from Rome came Monday night, the 31st, a few minutes before a dinner I arranged for the Sharps. Comte Louis de Vogué, who has been most helpful, was at the dinner; also Monsieur Brisac, who is Director of "Hygiène and Santé" and who is very friendly and kind, and who says once we are in the house to send for him and he will do anything for us. Of course, this is of *real importance* because he has charge of all the Paris blind soldiers and promises to send us any of them we want. This house rents at one thousand francs a month, and we take it as it is—no repairs. We are to pay 200 francs a month to the concierge, and 500 francs to the agents through whom we got the house. Mr. Archibald has been going over the lease for us and I go this afternoon to see him about the signing,

etc., so you will only receive a cable when all this is done and the house is ours.

In great haste and with best wishes,

Very sincerely,
L. Hewitt

Hotel Crillon
Feb. 9, 1916

Dear Mr. Satterlee:

Mrs. Hewitt has just been writing exhaustively to Mr. Choate so a letter to you is in order.

Enclosed is the official document giving us the house, which we believe is ours; but after our wild experiences of intrigue and bad faith, we are afraid to call our souls, much less brick and mortar, our own. If the Bon Dieu permits us to move into the Pope's palace we will be far better off than if we had had the sequestered building which the government so frequently gave and took back again.

The building in size and arrangement leaves little to be desired. Besides our 44 rooms, we have an old coach house, which gives on the ground floor, an excellent gymnasium and skating rink with concrete floor, a massage room adjoining a room for douches. We are planning to buy, to supplement the scanty bath equipment in the house, some of those inexpensive douches which are used at the Front. On the next floor of our

coach house we have a beautiful arrangement for the printing plant, including a big composing room and several editorial offices.

Our plan is to publish a War Magazine for the men, which will keep them *au courant* with the questions of the day as well as giving them interesting anecdotes. We have one or two blind men who are deeply interested in the suggestion, and we hope to have the men run their own magazine as far as possible. There is nothing of the sort that I know of on the Continent, though there are some magazines printed in Braille.

We have two gardens which will be joined into one and, with proper arrangement, will make an adequate outdoor playground. We have an old stable where we wish to start our first lessons in agriculture and chicken raising.

It would be impossible for you to know what it means to us to have the faith and good-will of the Home Committee. If you were able to follow what must seem to you our many mad performances, you would be gratified to find that each day we have acted with all the energy and diplomacy we were able to muster. We have simply been surmounting what were intended to be insurmountable obstacles.

Affectionately,
Winifred

VIII

THE FRENCH LIGHTHOUSE

Hotel Crillon

Feb. 17, 1916

Dear Buz:

The light is already burning in the Phare de France, near the Arc de Triomphe, and we hope that our work will soon be triumphant over the many obstacles which have beset it. Chimneys are swept and garnished, and by the first of March full steam should be up and the re-education of our blind heroes in their Lighthouse proceeding in full force. Inside are huge rooms with parquet floors and high ceilings. To the rear lofty French windows open on small stone terraces which descend to the garden. We were not content with our own garden, so the Comte broke down the high wall and gave us part of the neighboring garden. This adds immeasurably to our playground. Best of all, the house is only about a block and a half from the nearest subway station and but one block from a central tramway. It stands on high ground and is reached by the breezes from the Bois.

The Phare is ours unconditionally for the first six months; thereafter we have it by the month until six months after the war's end. The rent,

owing to the work which we propose to do, is ridiculously low. The government offers us a small subsidy and, as you know, we are under the patronage of the President of the Republic and the Minister of War, etc. We are very happy over this satisfactory solution of our problem, and feel that we have been singularly fortunate in the arrangement made.

Love,

G.G. (good girl)

Hotel Crillon,
Feb. 21, 1916

Dear F.R.:

Here is an example of a typical day. I am called early and consume two cups of hot water. Then gymnastic exercises and a bath. In half an hour my breakfast is waiting. I sit close to the telephone and, as I eat, call various people and read the paper.

By that time the office is open, and Mademoiselle de Villedon, Chef d'État Major, or Commandant of the Staff, appears. My pad has notes on the principal subjects of classes, the men, the staff and the housework, which she can undertake and delegate for me. According to the present arrangements, next comes the Directress of the Bureau. She, also, gets her day's work doled out and asks questions.

As I continue to telephone, to put on my medal ribbons and get myself in marching order, my stenographer—an Englishwoman—appears, and I give her such letters as I am able, including this one. After lunch I go to the house to supervise, rush back for tea with the philanthropists, followed by interviews.

It is only by eight or nine o'clock that I can get to my desk again, sign my letters, get something to eat, plot out the next day. I try to be asleep before midnight, but it is a very rare accomplishment. Of course if I dine out, things become very complicated. You appreciate that classes are going on all morning long next door, and there are always hosts of people to see me. Such a thing as a quiet hour to myself is utterly unknown. My bedroom door is the door of the house, and I must be prepared to see anybody, from a full general to postman.

I send you this account so that at long distance you may imagine what my life is. Of course I have only given you the home setting, but you must imagine many official visits, calls and teaching at hospitals, and an endeavor never to be tired or dusty, always to be humorous and able to combat the desperate mood of a newly-blind man.

A whole delegation is waiting to see me at this moment, so good-bye and God bless you all.

Winifred

14 Rue Daru
April 26, 1916

Dear Dr. Alger:

I want to tell you how very happy I have been in reading your interesting Lighthouse report and in following your sight-saving labors. I hope very much that we may be successful in getting a clinic. Can't you poke Mr. Payne up about it? Remind him of the good lady who owned so much real estate who seems inclined to give us one.

I wish you would send me a large supply of sight-saving literature and anything that you can find on the subject of French laws for the prevention of blindness, versus English and American laws.

When my vigil here becomes less severe I want very much to turn my thoughts to sight saving. I have seen much infant ophthalmia, and they tell me there is a shocking amount of it here. Please send me anything that you think would help, and in quantity—say at least 500 examples of everything which would be popular and interesting.

With kind greetings to you and Mrs. Alger, and all good wishes to the Lighthouse Crew and Passengers, I am, as always.

Gratefully yours,
Winifred Holt

Le Phare de France
April 21, 1916

Dearest One (Edith) :

I have been unusually busy, because Made-moiselle de Villedon, Mrs. Hewitt, and the Manager of the Lighthouse have been away on vacation, while I have held the Fort.

A cable has this morning come from America, from the blind man's club, saying: "Anniversary greetings to our Founder." I feel like Methuselah or Abraham—we have increased and multiplied so vastly in the blind world. The club is holding its tenth anniversary, and there are at least six others in America and now one in France. You will remember when we girls started it, and the men bumped the machinery in the old factory! It is now a prosperous organization, which frequently subsidizes the Lighthouse with generous contributions.

We have an exhibit in the great Exhibition of the Ville de Paris, and I am proud to say we are showing weaving made by the soldiers of the Phare de France. The authorities have been so greatly impressed that they have allotted us an entire room of charming proportions and possibilities. I have turned the job over to Mr. Cauldwell, a little artist of much taste, and ludicrously like Uncle Charlie!

God bless you all and keep America in an honorable peace, if that is any longer possible.

Apart from peace averting the limitless tragedy of war, those who are fighting the battle of civilization are sorely in need, including the Lighthouse folk, of all the moral and substantial aid which America can send.

Your devoted,
G.G.

14 Rue Daru
June 1, 1916

Dear Mr. Choate:

This week I have merely to report progress all along the line, and our sorrow at the approaching departure of Mrs. Hewitt, who has been so kind and helpful. We shall miss her greatly.

We have more blind men, and still more coming. The athletic apparatus has been put up, and the men enjoy the gymnasium greatly. The push ball has just come, and we are planning to use it in the great court. The men are very pleased and excited over the prospect.

Yesterday we held a remarkable meeting of the Men's Club. A Deputy, who moved the Pension for the Blind, came and made an eloquent speech. So important is the club becoming, that the men decided to schedule evening "reunions" to enable many important people who are busy all day to attend. Sighted lawyers, politicians, and businessmen, etc., are to become associate members, thus giving the men new, powerful friends to help them in their difficult careers. Our

Commandant, a charming gentleman, said: "The greatest menace to the blind is the short-sightedness of the seeing." Le Club du Phare should exist for the re-education of the seeing in relation to the possibilities of the blind.

Our exhibit continues to cause great interest and amazement, as we are doing wonderful things with knitting machines.* After only ten days' apprenticeship, a blind, one-armed man turned out an excellent sweater. Our biggest blind man, who is called Béb  and who has a delightful spirit, has a live chicken whom we call Jacqueline. The chicken is extremely tame, and it is pathetic and funny to see the pleasure the blind men take in it. I hope next to report a dog and perhaps a parrot as "pensionnaires."

I must not gossip any more, as there are many people waiting for me at the Lighthouse. I hope that you are well and happy. The blind bless you and the Committee each day for having made the Phare de France possible.

Affectionately yours,
Gardienne du Phare

Dear Buz:

We motored to the Phare de Bordeaux, a very pretty, simple, low chateau, where we discovered

* Mrs. Hewitt interested Worth, the great designer of clothes, in the products of the Phare's knitting machines. He ordered dresses and sweaters which he sold with great success, thus starting the fashion of knitted suits, etc., for women.

the Abbé under an old yewtree, playing with a baby of three. Its mother, his niece, sat by. The Abbé rejoiced to see us, and showed us through the Phare. There was one particularly pathetic blind man there, who, since his blindness, had been shunted from hospital to hospital, having been exchanged by some twelve hospitals in all. The poor man was dazed, morose, and despairing. The Abbé had had the inspiration of giving him "tilleul" (Lyme) leaves and of showing him how to cut off the fragrant fruit from the leaf. As he sat there in his uniform with the black patches over his eyes, the light touched the tender green of the branches. He was a very pathetic sight, and it took one's entire faith in the power of the goodness of the Abbé to feel that he could be raised from his inexpressive misery to take his place again among the upstanding men of the world.

I was so impressed with the Abbé's goodness that I later accepted a position on the Committee of the Phare de Bordeaux, and decided to give it more of my personal attention than formerly. In connection with the Phare de France, it will complete a circle of usefulness, the Phare de Bordeaux taking the simpler men who would be mainly dependent on manual training, while the higher re-education will be given at the Phare de France.

Your affectionate sister,
G.G.

Dear Mr. Choate,
Yesterday I cabled you:

CHOATE NYAFBLIND NEW YORK
PHARE OPENED BY PRESIDENT REPUB-
LIC AND AMBASSADOR GREAT SUCCESS
HOLT

As you may care to use the opening of the Phare for publicity, I will do my best, despite much work and little time, to describe it:

On August 8, 1916, the President of the French Republic and the American Ambassador opened the French Lighthouse for the Blind.

Between the two glass doors of the Lighthouse hung a shield on which was painted a beautiful Lighthouse set high on rocks in troubled waters. From its lamp shone three bright rays signifying "Liberté, Fraternité, Egalité." Framing this Lighthouse like a life-buoy were the words: "Ex tenebris lux" ("Out of Darkness, Light").

Next to the Lighthouse flag stood a group of brightly uniformed officers—all blinded in battle. The staff was radiant and dressed in its best; well under the control of its directrice, that eternally vigilant, efficient, and sympathetic little lady. Her assistants were a Belgian gentleman (a refugee from Brussels) and a young reformé soldier, shot by the Germans at Lille. First the ambassador and his daughter were announced,

and appreciatively welcomed. Then two blue motors, with footmen and chauffeurs wearing the tri-color, appeared; the ambassador accompanied the Gardienne to the foot of the steps. From the first car came the little gentleman in black, the protocol, accompanied by a huge general in red with much gold, the military aid to the president. In a moment President and Madame Poincaré left the car and the ambassador introduced the Gardienne to these charming representatives of the French nation. Then the party mounted the steps and entered the great hall.

First the representatives of the two great republics signed their names in the Lighthouse Log, and then made the tour of the Lighthouse in the following order: Typewriting Room, Braille Library, and Reading and Writing Room. The procession paused often to watch with great interest the work which the pupils were doing. Then the beautiful room which had been turned into a museum was inspected. A blind schoolmaster explained the various writing appliances. The statues and the idea that the blind could learn in the museum to see, by substituting their fingers for their eyes, appealed to the president. Madame Poincaré was particularly interested in the beautiful examples of weaving produced by the pupils of the Lighthouse in New York.

As the president turned from his inspection, he saw a pathetic pair—a lady leading a Lighthouse

pupil, blind and without arms. The president paused, the Gardienne presented the hero to him, and lifted his curious false arm so that it touched Monsieur Poincaré; the other sleeve hung empty. The president's hand grasped the mechanical hand of the blind man, whose brain received the message that he was shaking hands with the chief representative of France, of La Patrie, for whom he had suffered so much.

"My friend, have you been otherwise wounded?" asked the Président. Holding himself very erect the soldier answered with immortal pride, "Yes, all over, Monsieur le Président."

During the course of the procession, every blind man was handed a little sealed parcel, a gift from the President, by one of the aids who followed the party about. On each precious paper was a cock of France and the French flag. The contents included a pipe, tobacco, a shaving brush, and sundry other articles dear to masculine comfort and self-esteem.

The company next invaded the old stable, now the handicraft shop. There handwoven materials made by a blind man were viewed with much favor. The first invention for the mutilated blind of the war that we know of, the simple device of a blind man who had lost his right arm, was studied. The inventor arranged a string so that his foot could hold it: this does the necessary work which his right arm cannot accomplish, and

keeps in place part of the weaving appliance, leaving him his one good arm to do the rest of the work.

The next craft to interest the company was the knitting machine. Here a one-armed man, unable to wear an articulated apparatus, knitted faultlessly part of a sweater while explaining in detail his work, and presented Madame Poincaré with a miniature sweater for a bazaar and a large sweater which, as he touchingly said, was "for a brave soldier who somewhere in France is doing that work which, alas, I can no longer do."

We then crossed the courtyard to the massage room. A blind man explained the skeleton which he was studying while the professor who taught him looked wise. The douches were greatly admired. The men find these both beneficial and very refreshing (hot or cold water) after their gymnastic work or sports.

Then the details of the first gymnasium for the blind in France were studied carefully. The little flat wooden strip on the floor, a foot and a half in advance of the wall, the slope towards the wall to prevent accidents, were carefully observed. The ladders for Swedish exercises and horizontal bars also called forth appreciative comment.

Then a fencing match took place between the "Maître d'armes," well known to the Président and adjutants, and a blind tall Meridional. Before the latter gave his eyes for civilization, he

must have been a dangerous foilsman. As it is, he is quick and extraordinarily graceful at "fleur-et." He hard pressed the little fencing master and created great enthusiasm among the on-lookers.

After his remarkable performance he removed his gloves and mask and took a woven bag from the hand of a nearby Lighthouse worker. The man of war turned suddenly into a peaceful citizen and with a low bow presented the handiwork of his loom—a useful, what our grandmothers called, "reticule"—to the Président's wife. The guests were then told of the uses of the Braille electric-printing press, the first of the kind in France, but they did not climb to the floor above to inspect it.

Every blind man made happy by the warm hand shakes and kind greetings of the representatives of France and America; and the work having been all inspected with unusually quick and sympathetic understanding; Président and Madame Poincaré warmly thanked the Gardienne for what the Comité Franco-American pour les Aveugles de la Guerre had done for France. The commandant, followed by the other officers, descended the steps to the court. Having executed their difficult task with consummate kindness and grace, the Président and his wife left the Phare de France.

IX

THE OPERA AND POLYBE

Last Wednesday the President of the Republic gave us the use of his box for the opera Comique. The director and I, together with six blind men, went to see the ballet from *Lackmé*. As the orchestra played, my blind charges would instinctively turn to me to find out what was happening. I would describe the scenery, how the performers were dressed, etc. It took no little skill to keep up a running commentary without interference with the music.

After the performance, the director went in search of taxis. To my dismay I found myself alone in that great crowd with six blind men who clung to me like pathetic children. Gradually we were pushed towards the staircase; I had a blind man clinging to each arm, with four unprovided for. "My friends, hold on to my cloak," I cried. I was wearing a liberty cloak, fortunately fastened at the throat by a stout silken cord. Carefully, we began our perilous descent, jostled by a rapidly moving throng. We finally arrived in the foyer intact, but a nasty accident on those hard marble stairs could easily have happened.

The men, of course, treated the whole affair as a huge joke. As we waited a few moments for

our taxis, one began an animated discussion about the legs of the ballet dancer. "You see, the anatomy of the French differs so from the anatomy of the Anglo-Saxon," I heard him remark. "I didn't notice; I was thinking of other things," said the mathematician loftily. "Such spirit as the Daughter of the Regiment had," exclaimed the Bordeaux schoolmaster. My thoughts turned to those men who were fighting less than fifty miles away, to that human barrier of flesh and bone which alone had made it possible for these blind soldiers to see that night the ballet from the box of the French president.

14 Rue Daru
Sept. 6, 1916

Dear Mr. Choate:

It occurs to me that you may care for the photographs and the beautiful letter which was written by our first pupil, whom we originally found in the hospital at Bordeaux. He is now a very smart, happy young man, full of interest in life. His mother has commanded me to find him a worthy wife. This will not be easy.

My friend Miss Evans, who has been over here helping us, says that our work and our plant compare favorably with St. Dunstons* though our

* A home and school for the blind established by Arthur Pierson in England.

grounds are not nearly as large, and we have no river. She thought, however, that we would be able to obtain as good results, with the exception that it would be necessary to find some outside place to teach our men boating and swimming. We have met this by using the lake in the Bois de Boulogne, and by making arrangements with bathing establishments.

Affectionately,
Winifred

The following article from the Paris Figaro of Nov. 10, 1916, is an unusual combination of a blind pupil's letter and an appeal from one of France's foremost journalists. (Translated).

"Monsieur:

"Will you permit me to call your attention to one of the most interesting groups of victims of the world war. I refer to those who have given their eyes for the defense of their country. I admit that much has been written in their favor; people have spoken of the obligations which France ought to feel for those who have been so sorely afflicted; private generosity has been wonderfully effective, but the problem of the war blind has been but partially solved. It is comparatively easy for a blind soldier to continue the work he did before the war if that work was manual. But there is a class of war blind for whom the problem of pro-

fessional re-education seems more difficult. Those are the blind soldiers who were preparing to enter (or who already had entered) the liberal professions. They have attracted little attention.

"But thanks to the generous initiative of an American well-known to you, Miss Winifred Holt, they have not been completely forgotten. She has founded a school called symbolically "The Lighthouse of France," where, besides all the material comforts one could desire, the people I speak of receive special instruction courses in stenography, typewriting, foreign languages, business courses, etc.

"Now these efforts need to be known to the government and also to the heads of big business concerns and factories who could offer to these wounded heroes positions which would permit them to add something to their small pensions.

"This is the reason I have made my appeal to you as a Frenchman to use your talent as a writer in our behalf. There are no lack of examples to illustrate what I mean, but the best perhaps is the case of Henry Fawcett, about whom Miss Holt wrote a book.

"Between the career of this blind man who became a professor, an MP, and finally postmaster-general, and one who makes brushes (a trade to which people seem too willing to condemn all blind men) there must be places for all sorts of intellects, all sorts of energies."

What can I add to this letter which has the double eloquence of a glorious misfortune and of personal experience? I address this appeal not only to government enterprises, and to legislative commissions, but to our learned societies, to all sorts of executive officers, to our great professional syndicates, to our chambers of commerce, to the municipal authorities of our great cities. They do not need to take my word for the truth of what I say. Let them go to the Lighthouse: things will speak for themselves, will certainly induce these men to do their part in this admirable enterprise and to try to find for all those re-educated blind men the right use for the new life they have begun. Never will it have been truer that light comes after darkness.

Polybe

X

WAR WORK

With the French Lighthouse established, Miss Holt returned to the United States in the winter of 1916-17 for an extended lecture tour in behalf of the men blinded in battle. From December 1916 until her tour was cancelled because of America's entry into the war, Winifred addressed 31 groups in 13 cities, many of them in private homes. She raised on an average of \$3,500 for each talk.

This successful campaign was marred by sorrow. In May The Hon. Joseph H. Choate died while representing the United States in dealing with the British and French War Commissions. Both the Lighthouse and the Men Blinded in Battle lost in him a powerful and understanding friend.

Immediately when the United States declared war, Winifred offered the services of her committee to the government. She returned to France to lay the groundwork for collaboration with both the Red Cross and the American Medical Corps.

Aug. 27, 1917 Baltimore

Dear F. R.; (Miss Rogers)

I am still facing unpleasantnesses and uncertainties. Though nothing is decided, I feel that you are the first person who should know of my probable plans. I am trying to get somebody to act as Miss Howard's understudy for the Committee for Men Blinded in Battle. This committee will not go out of existence, will keep its identity while cooperating with the Red Cross.

I have seen Mr. Davison, head of the Red Cross, and have had a long talk with him again. He asked me to go to Russia and I shall probably also go to France and Italy on the 15th. If I sail then, where shall we meet? I don't even know where you have taken refuge from the rays of the Lighthouse. It would not be essential for us to see one another, as my sister has promised to be my ambassador to you and the Lighthouse folk, but of course I want to if it wouldn't mean your coming to town.

I think you are largely responsible for the success of our work, as but for your faithfulness it would not have been. You may care to have a copy of the enclosed letter from General Pershing. Take half of the compliment for yourself and pass it on to your descendants.

I shall write soon again from Paris.

Affectionately, Winifred

Ambassador Jusserand to Hon. Justine Godard: (translated)

Hon. Assistant Secretary of State:

I take the liberty of sending you this line introducing Miss Winifred Holt, who really does not require it as she has gone to France at the invitation of our government to receive from your hands the gold medal which her zeal, her self-sacrifice and the success of her work for our blinded soldiers has so well merited.

In awarding this recognition our government not only honors Miss Holt, but gives great satisfaction to a great many Americans who recognize her devotion and ability in caring for the blind. The work which she accomplished in New York was the best possible preparation for what she has done for us.

Accept, Hon. Assistant Secretary of State, the assurance of my regard and devotion.

Jusserand

LE PHARE DE FRANCE. 14 RUE DARU.

Dec. 20, 1917

Dear Mr. Ambassador (Sharp):

In accordance with the directions which you have just given me, I enclose a copy of the letter from M. Jusserand to M. Godard, sous-sécretaire

de l'État, and a copy of the letter of the blind organist of the Cathedral of Arras, with a translation. I think that M. Billeton's request for help for the blind refugees should be acted upon. I wish that we could have the opportunity of opening lighthouses for the blind children, women, and men in the neighborhood of Paris. My preliminary investigation indicated that the idea is entirely sane, and I believe that it would be an economic and merciful performance to find these people and to educate them, so that instead of the war having been an unmitigated tragedy for them it would have had its compensations, especially in the case of the men and women who might acquire new trades and industries. France will need after the war expert weavers, knitters, potterers, etc., which some of these blind refugees could easily, under proper training, become. You can imagine how happy I would be if I had the backing to undertake this new labour of love!

May I also remind you of my intense desire to go to Italy as suggested by Mr. Davison, head of the American Red Cross, in the telegram and letter of which you have copies. Please do not think I am outlining too large a venture. I know the people who could make a success of the program I suggest.

Gratefully yours,
Winifred Holt

Hotel Majestic, Paris
Feb. 7, 1918

Dear Friend in Need (Mr. Satterlee) :

There are now fifty men at the Phare de Bordeaux and, I think, fifty-three at the Phare de France and eleven at Sèvres. In the month of January, 2,800 lessons were given. They included the following subjects: Braille typewriting, English, French, Spanish, knitting, weaving, massage, commercial courses, gymnastics, fencing, basketball, anatomy, pottery, electricity, literature, history, geography, philosophy, logic, Latin. Commandant Salerin, one of our pupils, is still successfully directing the course of studies at the College de Saint Cyr. Boquet, our one-arm blind pupil, is teaching a class of twenty seeing-men electricity.

The Phare de Bordeaux is anxious to become a *filiâle*, and I think all of the advantage of having it do so would be on our side. We will give it 5 as an official number, making the New York Phare No. 1, the Buffalo Phare No. 2, the Paris Phare No. 3, the Sèvres Phare No. 4, and the Bordeaux Phare No. 5.

The Red Cross is being very generous and I hope will enable us to push the work and to open the chateau before long. We quite understand your writing to M. Mallet, who reports that 75,000 frs. were deposited with him. I hope that

you have successful meetings in New York and that all goes well. We need your support in every way.

When an American visitor came to our place, the other day he took out a little notebook and, not knowing that our directress spoke English, said to his wife in a low voice as he made notes on our different industries: "We will copy this. We will have that." Imitation is the sincerest flattery, and there is no lack of it.

Appreciatively yours,
Winifred Holt

March 12, 1918

Dear Lieutenant Green:

I cannot imagine why I did not say yes when you suggested my visiting hospitals at the front. Perhaps I was thinking of French hospitals which I have seen for three years. I would very much like to see American hospitals, if possible where the men are suffering from head wounds, as that is my business.

If you can find it practical to include a visit to some of these, in the program suggested for Mademoiselle de Oliveria and myself, we would be very glad.

Sincerely yours,
Winifred Holt

Headquarters American Expeditionary Forces
Intelligence Section

Press Division

Paris, 10 Rue St. Anne

March 13, 1918

Miss Winifred Holt

Hotel Majestic, Avenue Kleber

Paris

Dear Miss Holt:

I have communicated to G.H.Q. your request that you and Miss de Oliveria may be permitted to visit the American area. In accordance with the desire expressed yours of March 12th, I shall add one American hospital or two to the list of things which you wish to see.

As the C-in-C is at present absent from G.H.Q. it may be a week or so before we are able to make arrangements for your trip. I shall notify you as soon as definite plans can be made.

Yours very truly,

Joseph C. Green

1st Lieut. Inf. N.A.

(Undated)

My dear Miss Holt:

You have my profoundest sympathy in your splendid work with the soldiers blinded in battle, and I shall do all in my power to help you.

John J. Pershing
Commander in Chief of the A.E.F.

Dear Buzz: 14 Rue Daru May 30, 1918

I have several times been at General Headquarters and returned to lecture in its neighborhood the other day. General Pershing was very wonderful and is head of our committee. Through his courtesy I was sent in a comfortable automobile to the various places in France which I wished to visit. In six days I visited many hospitals and spoke seven times at night. I will try very hard to dictate an impression of the marvelous things I saw and heard. Of course, all such dictations will be more interesting when the censor has lifted the veil; but there is enough to make things dramatic.

I arrived in Paris on Monday night, to be welcomed by the sound of the sirens. I had had the foresight to telegraph for the motor, which was at the station. Cabs are impossible. We picked up two unknown American officers, dropped them at their hotel and sped to the enlivening accompaniment of the sirens to the Place de l'Etoile. I got there and rushed to the men at the Phare, sending de Oliveira in one direction and my luggage in another. The Boche did not pull off the raid, any more than they did last night, when we got one of their machines. The barrage is marvelous and usually keeps the murderers off.

I have been lecturing in Huts of the Y.M.C.A. At one place the boys came in muddy from the trenches, wearing their helmets and carrying their gas masks. I have my own helmet and my own gas mask, which were picturesque assets, but you are not to worry, as the government takes care of its ladies! I felt a little bit like Tartarin arriving with his lion skin when I, with my helmet, came back to Paris, to find that it had been freely bombarded during my absence.

I have been deeply interested in the last number of "The Unpopular Review" and congratulate father most heartily on it. Please do not hesitate to dispose of all my worldly goods in the cause of righteousness, keeping only those of historic value.

With love to all,

G. G. (Winifred)

Oct. 30, 1918

Dear Spirito Gentile (Mrs. Hewitt):

I have had to be heroic lately because the only way to help our boys was to give Miss Richardson to the Army. This took away one of the chief pillars of our work; then Mlle. de Oliveira almost died, and the grippe descended upon the rest of all, laying many low.

As sometimes I do not even receive my telegrams and the majority of my letters seem to stray, it seems prudent to repeat what you were told before. The Thompson Houston Worker's

Home, Lighthouse No. 6, D.V., will be opened before you receive this. It will fill a great need. Lighthouse No. 7 at Vichy, in quarters given us by the French Government, the Hospital de la Face, Hospital Militaire No. 45, was opened before I left Vichy. Our expenses for this are only a salary of \$20 a month given to a Braille professor until one of the soldiers becomes sufficiently expert himself to do the work. We have done the lion's share of helping the wounded here, though others claim the credit and glory. We have furnished all the usable equipment up to date and Miss Richardson, who has been our pupil for about two years, I think, now is the best teacher they have. Her salary is being paid now by the A.E.F., for whom we worked voluntarily, paying expenses of teachers, salaries, tools, etc., for about seven months. I have been paying all the salaries, traveling expenses, etc., for the Vichy work, for the secretaries and aides which have been sent over to me, out of my wee fund at the Farmer's Loan & Trust Co., of which separate monthly statements have been sent to you.

After one year this little fund is practically exhausted. If I had the funds I would go in search of the blue bird and the land of the blue bird (Italy). Hoping that I can count on you, I am with kind greetings to you and all the other members of the committee and all the other workers,

Affectionately yours, Winifred Holt

XI

ITALIAN LIGHTHOUSE

Hotel Excelsior

April 24, 1919

Dear Buz:

Here I am in Rome, which I have not seen since I was sixteen. People are very kind to me and, as usual, I am extraordinarily busy. Mrs. Hewitt leaves on Saturday, but I shall stay on, having promised to give some talks in English, Italian, and French, if you please, in Florence and here! It makes me very glad to think that I may be of service to the country which I like best in the world—next to mine of course!

Do not let your dear head imagine things about swains and marriage. I wish that I could help you out by marrying a millionaire or a *pauper* (the one is just as likely as the other), but work is all I can think about at present and probably in the future. I should really not be writing to you for I have so much official work to do, but I am combining this dictation with a very fine manicure which I am giving myself in preparation for luncheon with our ambassador, Thomas Nelson Page. Mrs. Hewitt is going with me, but she returns to America very soon. My plans are absolutely indefinite, and I am still waiting to

have the explanation of the draft which was made on you.

Please send this the domestic and Lighthouse rounds, for I do not know when I shall get another chance to write you. My secretary is returning to America because of very bad news from his father, and though his substitute is valiant, she should herself be having a rest, instead of being overworked.

Yours affectionately,
Winifred

Hotel Excelsior
Via Veneto—Rome
May 6, 1919

Dear Lucy (Mrs. Hewitt) :

Here is the list (missing) of people who are to constitute my committee for two conferences: (1) The Battle Blind and their Re-education; and (2) The Prevention of Blindness and the Problems of the Blind.

The meetings were scheduled for next Monday and Tuesday at the Grand, but owing to the political situation they will probably be held a few days later under the patronage of our ambassador and the French Ambassador. We have also been asked to give the Romans a Lighthouse for the officers; the enlisted men would be looked after according to plans agreed upon by the Baroness Blanc's committee. The ambassador thinks this is a per-

fectly splendid idea. I want to do it. Never was there such a splendid opportunity for service. The idea is to place the Phare under the direction of Baroness Blanc's committee. I would act in an advisory capacity, to start the work in the right lines and keep it there, as at Bordeaux. But we would have the joy of creating a model work in Rome. Of course, unless we give a sufficiently large subscription to make them take us seriously, we cannot keep them in hand and the work will be of the usual inefficient and antiquated kind. Nothing however that I have proposed has been done. If I had the money, I would do preliminary work now and return next winter to start the thing in full blast. You remember this is what I did in Bordeaux. It took three visits from me and constant coaching to get things running in as good shape as it now does. They are adding all sorts of potentates to my committee and I am receiving extraordinary hospitality and friendliness for a foreigner, especially under present existing conditions, which are so heartbreaking between countries which have loved each other so long and which should never misunderstand each other. Everybody is so nice to me I am convinced that I shall be allowed to do splendid things here. The money is all that is necessary. Just think, for us to have Lighthouses in New York, in Paris, in Rome! Please do not let this opportunity go; it is a great compliment as well as a great oppor-

tunity to be asked to serve. I cannot yet find where all the Italian blind are, but I have seen a great many whose blindness was unnecessary. If we could only carry out the program which I have given to you and Mr. Persons, I believe that we could help the blind in all the Latin countries and start to help those in the Orient.

Affectionately yours,
Winifred Holt

The following cablegram was sent to Mrs. Hewitt.

Rome, July 27, 1919

ITALIAN LIGHTHOUSE FOUNDED STOP PATRONAGE
QUEEN COMMA GOVERNMENTAL SUPPORT SECURED
STOP IMMEDIATE CABLED BANCA COMMERCIALE
ROME COMMA SUBSTANTIAL AMERICAN BACKING
NECESSARY STOP SECURE IMPORTANT ITALIAN
DONATIONS.

HOLT

Rome

Aug. 11, 1919

Dear Lucy (Mrs. Hewitt) :

On Saturday the 9th I sent you the following cable:

"Thousands depend on you obtain immediate telegraphed assurance seventy-five thousand dollars stop Secure unique model house and land in Rome for blind comma immediate purchase

urged by experts comma delay meaning failure stop Have given my jewels and money for week's option comma without your support lose personally as well as opening international service desired by Queen and Ambassadors."

After lunch a little group of us discussed the affairs of "Il Faro d'Italia, No. 8." Mattoli showed them the telegram I had sent that morning and to my very real satisfaction the following cable was written by him and signed by those members of the Committee who were most representative, knew most about the work, and the wonderful opening that we would have by acquiring the house:

"Urgently recommend previous request Holt telegram securing unique opportunity for blind immediately depend on you stop Rennell Rodd, British Ambassador; Jay, Charge Affaires; Princess Aldobrandini, President Committee; Maggiore Mattaoli; Baron Morpurgo."

This house happens to have just been vacated by the Ministry of Sanità; it is No. 87 Via del Tritone, a little below where the triton blows his fountain horn in Piazza Barberini. The trams pass the door; the house is about the width of Lighthouse No. 1, and four stories, with mezzanine.

Tomorrow the legal papers will be signed and three thousand dollars will be given by me to secure an option of seventy days. If we want

it we must pay down \$75,000 at that time; the rest to be paid at Christmas.

We have a tenant on the first floor who pays lira 19,200. If we cannot afford to use the whole building, which should be done for the greatest interest of the blind (it is none too large), we could rent other floors and mortgage the house until our income permits us to hold it free of debt.

With this Lighthouse in Rome and funds to run it, we can give a fair deal to 43,000 blind men, women, and children (civil and military). We cannot hold the ground we have won and progress under present conditions. Never was there a finer investment spiritually and morally to ensure a cordial welcome from St. Peter. You must have a special interest in "Il Faro d'Italia, No. 8," which, God willing, will stand not so very far from the burial ground where the saint was laid and above which now rises the dome of St. Peter's.

Affectionately,
Winifred

Between April 9 and August 14—a mere matter of four months—Winifred made a going concern of her new Lighthouse. Here, she sums up the work of "Il Faro d'Italia No. 8" in a progress report:

Founded June 14, 1919, under the auspices of the Comitato Italo-American per La Prevenfione della Cecità e Assistenze dei Ciechi, under the

patronage of H.M. the Queen. Rome, Palazzo Aldobrandini. The Committee "Italo-Americano" for the Prevention of Blindness and Care of the Blind does its work regardless of race, creed, age, or condition, for the military and civil blind.

Census: The Faro has made a census of the blind throughout Italy and Sardinia. It sends visitors to blind soldiers, civilians, women, children, in hospitals, sanatoriums, houses of re-education, institutions, poorhouses, and in their homes.

Literature: Books, music, magazines, etc., printed in Braille have been distributed to the blind through the Faro. "La Luce del Faro," a magazine for the blind, will be sent out periodically to them and their friends.

Assistance: Aid given to the blind through doctors, nurses, and visitors and relief sent by the Faro, including medicines, food, clothes, materials, tools, machines, etc.

Instruction: It has given instruction in reading and writing of Braille, typewriting, playing of games, etc. Distribution of educational paraphernalia, including books, writing paper, writing tablets, typewriters, music, tools, looms, knitting machines, etc.

Employment: It has placed blind women, soldiers, and civilians at work in homes and hospitals, or given work to them in their homes and

hospitals, in hand and machine knitting, making of baskets, brooms, etc., copying Braille literature and music, typewriting, secretarial and telephone work, playing and singing for entertainments.

Correspondence: Letters have been received from the blind written in long hand, by typewriter and in Braille, and have been answered in an effort to meet their needs, to place them at work, to find homes and happiness for them.

Entertainment: Amusements and games have been given to the blind, including checker boards, dominoes, tombola, cards, etc., tobacco, pipes, and delicacies, reading aloud, concerts of vocal and instrumental music in institutions and at home. They have been treated to luncheons, dinners, railroad fares for excursions, drives by carriages and automobiles. Tickets have been furnished them for concerts, theatres, and operas.

It was during this trying period, while Winifred grappled with the problems of her latest Lighthouse, that she first met her husband-to-be. In letters to Edith and Buz, she characterizes him thusly:

“Rufus Graves Mather is my great new friend and a brother of father’s Princeton friend, Frank Mather. He’s helpful and trustable, short and fat—and, though not expressive, a round nugget of purest gold.

"Mr. Mather has been a gift of God—I tremble before our friendship. Of course, I'm a fool about the holiness of things, but it seems as if this new friend felt as you and I do about life—God grant it and he will help us by making our trio of idealists less incredible—I mean that you and I and Beppie have always been little Don Quixotes and perhaps there's a fourth person who likes to tilt at windmills on the horizon.

"Mr. Mather, who spends his time between his partially paralyzed mother and digging into fourteenth century archives in Florence, is doing yeoman's work on our executive committee. He has been a tower of strength and a Solomon in judgment, and if we win here . . . it will be truly thanks to him."

The Committee for Men Blinded in Battle
111 East 59th Street New York
Nov. 19, 1919

My Dear Mrs. Bloodgood:

The American Committee for Helping Italian Blind was organized on Monday at a meeting at Mr. Satterlee's house.

Mr. Satterlee spoke charmingly of the work, and of all that Miss Holt has accomplished; Mrs. Hewitt gave a brief account of the Italian needs, and then the Consul and Dr. Previtali spoke.

I sent the following cable to Winifred after the meeting:

“Committee organized seventeenth. Starting campaign raise money for house.”

For Committee, M. Howard

Rome, Jan. 28, 1920

Dear Mr. Chairman (Mr. Satterlee) :

The fact that I have been here ten months and that we have thus far no real headquarters where we can work and advertise has laid me, as representative of the organization itself, open to attack. You know the small amount which we have deposited in the bank; it grows less each day, and our position becomes more and more critical.

It is only by the utmost dexterity that I can hold things together any longer. On the other hand, if our committee will cable me immediately good support—say \$75,000 at the present rate of exchange—I believe that I could get the same amount here. Our treasurer very recently repeated that if I raised five million francs for Italy he would see that Italy did the same thing. This would give us ten million francs. With such a sum we could have the entire cooperation of the Italian Government, could pass laws for the prevention of blindness, secure the moral and financial support of the great personalities whose interest I have aroused, and change the condition of the blind in Italy.

A distinguished man once said: “When my sons travel I do not give them letters of introduc-

tion. I give them a good bank account. That is better, and opens doors and secures interest from every one."

You might quote to the committee what I have just read in Mr. Choate's biography; his exhortation to a New York audience for funds to do God's work: "There are said to be twelve hundred millionaires in this city. Their money is corrupting them and their families. Now each of you select your millionaire or millionaires and get this money from them. Go personally, and take each by the throat, if necessary. Above all, do not make the mistake of approaching them through their wives. That is the worst way. Let some other man's wife take the millionaire by the throat and see how quickly the money can be raised." Mr. Choate said this of the City of New York, but as I understand it our committee has the right to beg from all America!

I am gratefully, trustfully, and affectionately yours.
Winifred Holt

Rome, Feb. 5, 1920

Dear Spirito Gentile (Mrs. Hewitt):

You will be interested to know that the Principessa Boncompagna has turned into my tower of strength here. She and the Prince de la Scala are real friends, as well as the Principessa Aldobrandini and Nonna's niece, the Marchessa Torrigiani. I gave a tea the other day at which these

ladies received and, to my surprise, much of Rome appeared, and I danced. I have been taking lessons of Picchette. You should see me dance! This opening paragraph is to sugar-coat a very radical and earnest exhortation.

Our workers in Paris simply cannot hold out any longer nervously unless they are sure that the work will continue. I hear on undoubted authority that the plan which I sent to you ages ago for a permanent house, and about which I talked to you in Paris, is to be copied by our competitors. We should buy a house, install our press, and make our work permanent.

As soon as the organization here is completed locally and the staff is sufficiently trained for me to leave it, I could go to Paris, cheer up the staff there, which is worried and uncertain; and go to America, tour the country under a competent manager, show slides, exhort, and, God willing, raise still further funds for France and Italy. At present I have received no word from my home committee and have about Lira 30,000 in bank. That is not much, you must admit. I beg you, on receipt of this, to send reassuring word to fill the workers in France with trust in the future and to give me the backing which is essential. I can exhort, create friends, or give my body to be burned for the blind here, but if I do not have the wherewithal to push the work, such technique or ability which I possess have all been thrown away.

Please, in behalf of the blind, hear this heartfelt cry and send us money, money, money, so that we may develop and withstand.

With much love, trust and hope,

Affectionately, Winifred Holt

Winifred finally saw that there was no use waiting longer for funds that never arrived. With the work per se safely incorporated and her committee well briefed, she returned to the United States and personally raised the monies required. Then, wherewithal in hand, she cabled the committee to purchase a large house in the center of Rome, opposite the Palazzo Barberini. And in February of 1922 she had the extreme satisfaction of seeing the Italian Lighthouse (No. 8), free of any debt, opened formally by the Queen of Italy.

Shortly thereafter, Italy bestowed a Gold Medal on Winifred, the second woman ever to receive it. In the interim she had also received the Legion of Honor from the French Government.

But Winifred had learned a lesson. From here on she worked in an advisory capacity and did not burden herself with fund raising for the blind. Nor did she accept positions on committees once she had formed them. A case in point was Lighthouse No. 9, called "Latarnia Polska (Lantern of Poland)," which, once established by Winifred, was left in the capable hands of Poles familiar with local conditions.

XII

COURTSHIP, MARRIAGE, AND HONEYMOON

From this period on, many of Winifred's letters were of the circular, or chain, variety, and because many of these were lost in transit or never forwarded, they do not appear herein. However, Winifred's husband, Rufus Graves Mather, kept copious notes, and much of the following material was either written or compiled by him.

What little is known about Rufus's courtship of Winifred is recorded here, all too briefly, by Rufus:

In Rome from that time on, Winifred and I worked together day after day for many hours, and our comradeship grew stronger and stronger. house No. 9, called "*Latarnia Polska (Lantern of Poland)*," which, once established by Winifred, was left in the capable hands of Poles familiar

I often used to take Winifred out in a taxi to restaurants in the suburbs. The meter of the waiting taxi merrily ran up the charge. We also took long walks in the evening through the city and in the nearby Campagna, and often visited the Coliseum during the full of the moon. It was on one of these bright evenings that Winifred agreed to become my wife.

A few days later, I drove her out to Tivoli, where, in the famous Roman Temple, I placed my dear mother's engagement ring on her finger.

Eden Hotel, Rome
Sept. 8, 1922

D.D. (Dear Father) :

Edie has given you my news and it is of great satisfaction that this great secret will, according to your letter, give you pleasure.

I feel that this great step in my life will be for the greater good and that instead of turning back from plowing I have acquired a great heart, a dear head, and a firm hand to help me plow better. We have common ideals and tastes which should safeguard the future and help to make our dreams come true.

More, when I see you before long, and for now love from your devoted,

G.G. (Winifred)

Early in September, Winifred returned to New York to make arrangements for her marriage.

Nov. 9, 1922

My dear Miss Holt :

I have your letter of November 7th, in which you tell me about the plan to raise a National Fund of \$500,000 to carry on the Lighthouse work for the blind in France and Italy. I note too that

it is proposed that this fund be raised as a bit of sentimental tribute in honor of your approaching marriage. You have been so fine and unselfish in carrying on your wonderful work in behalf of the blind that I am sure they, and those who sympathize with them, and those who appraise the wonderful field for helpful work, will be glad to assist enthusiastically in this especial undertaking. It has been a most gratifying thing to note the establishment of these Lighthouses in Europe, and it would be a disappointment beyond measure to have this new undertaking fail because of inadequacy of funds. I am very sure that the situation need only be brought to the attention of those who desire to be helpful to make certain of the success of your enterprise. I am more than glad to be considered a patron, and will rejoice with you when the ample funds are raised and the continued activities of the Lighthouse campaign for the relief of the blind of Europe are assured.

Very truly yours,
Warren G. Harding

Ambassade de France a Washington
Nov. 12, 1922

Dear Miss Holt:

Allow me to join your innumerable admirers and well-wishers and say to you how earnestly I hope that you, to whom so many owe their hap-

piness, whose guiding light you have been, will, in your turn, know what it is to be happy.

Your work here and in France and anywhere you have been so good as to bring help, has been memorable indeed, not only through what you have accomplished, but also as giving an example for others to imitate.

Be so good as to accept the small gift here enclosed; it comes from one of your most sincere well-wishers, who begs to subscribe himself

Respectfully yours,
Jusserand

Winifred chose Nov. 16, 1922, as her wedding day, and she and Rufus decided that the ceremony should be held at the Lighthouse.

Her father entered into the spirit of the affair but was anxious that all should be done well, as this fragment of his letter shows:

Nov. 13, 1922

Win dear:

Too bad you can't see me today, or probably before tomorrow afternoon—Dr. Edie's orders.

Meanwhile I will be as useful as I can be, enclosing \$250, which I think you must have immediate use for; and if you have immediate use for more, let me know promptly. Edie and I have arranged that the automobile is to be *my* gift.

Make the folks keep in mind that at the tea there are to be at least lemonade and some sort

of red punch in addition to what is already provided. Still I don't believe in tempting people to gorge themselves at that time of day.

From an account in the Nov. 14, 1922, New York Evening Mail:

BLIND POILUS' BEACON SAVED BY BRIDAL GIFTS TO MISS HOLT

Stream of Checks and Humbler Offerings
Encourages Her Belief \$500,000 Needed
for "Lighthouse" Is Now Assured

The Paris Lighthouse, beacon of hope for hundreds of poilus who gave their sight for France and civilization, will not go out. Miss Winifred Holt, who founded the Lighthouse and who will give her wedding gifts of cash to keep the flame of hope burning for her blind proteges felt confident today that her dowry would reach the \$500,000 needed to save the French veterans from ejection.

Her confidence was built on the fact that President Harding had endorsed her plan and that she is receiving wedding gifts in great number today with \$5,000 given anonymously by a man high in the administration at Washington, and scores of other gifts, including those of from \$3 to \$5 each from the blind.

By Thursday, when Miss Holt, daughter of

Henry Holt, will wed Rufus Graves Mather, the international benefactor of the blind believes her wedding gifts will be in excess of the amount needed.

There has never been a wedding ceremony in New York like Miss Holt's will be.

In the auditorium of the New York Lighthouse, which she founded, instead of at the altar of a fashionable church, with Bishop Manning officiating, and with four society women and four blind women as bridesmaids, Miss Holt will be wedded without a single wedding gift she can call her own.

And, unlike many weddings, Miss Holt's will in no wise interfere with her life's work among the blind of the world, but will further her work, since her fiancé is in perfect sympathy with her splendid plan and will help her in every way possible. He has given her wedding checks for \$2,500 and \$1,000 for the Paris Lighthouse.

A short time ago Miss Holt received word from Paris that the Papal Nuncio, from which the Paris Lighthouse building was obtained, had given notice to M. Chevrillon, its director, that unless the purchase price of the building were paid by December 16, the building must be vacated.

At about this time, Miss Holt's friends were giving her their congratulations at the approach of her wedding. There would be gifts—many of them. Jewelry, silver, and glittering glass and the

thousand and one things which go to make up the array of presents for a society wedding.

Miss Holt saw a way to save her Paris Lighthouse. She would ask her friends to make their wedding gifts in cash.

Miss Holt's fiancé thought the plan an inspiration. Her friends were enthusiastic. A committee was formed to help swell the fund, and Mrs. Cooper Hewitt volunteered to act as chairman of the committee. William Forbes Morgan, banker and broker of 71 Broadway, volunteered as treasurer, and gifts are being sent to him.

Miss Holt was radiant today at her success in having President Harding and Secretary of State Hughes endorse her plan. Her dream of a "circle of light" to extend around the world for those who now live in outer darkness now appears probable. With the New York Lighthouse well established, the Paris Lighthouse on a permanent basis, and the Lighthouse she founded in Rome satisfactorily maintained, she will redouble her efforts to make the "circle of light" a reality.

Rev. Raymond Collier Knox (chaplain of Columbia University and an old friend of the Holt sisters) assisted Bishop Manning at the wedding. A blind organist and blind violinist supplied the music, and a squad of blind Boy Scouts held the ribbons to keep the center aisle open; after the ceremony a choir of blind girls sang in the gallery.

Mr. Mather writes:

In order to plan for a money-raising campaign to buy the building of the Paris Lighthouse, we decided that we must spend our honeymoon in New York. So we went directly to a suite on the 22nd floor of the Hotel Pennsylvania. In those days there was an uninterrupted view down to the Battery, a spectacle of splendor by day and one of mystical beauty at night. We called our suite "Paradise Peak."

After we left the Hotel Pennsylvania, we made a short visit to Winifred's sister and her family in Baltimore. Then back to her brother at 44 East 78th Street. Winifred was seized with a virulent form of influenza which temporarily paralyzed her legs. While she was still bed-ridden, she insisted on having meetings of the Committee for Men Blinded in Battle in her bedroom to raise funds for the Paris Lighthouse.

On the day set by the owner of the Paris building for our committee to say definitely whether or not we would purchase it, we cabled to the committee in Paris to "buy."

New York
Dec. 28, 1922

Dear Father:

I hate to send you these bills, but I suppose it is the penalty of getting rid of an old-maid daugh-

ter to clothe her for her exit. You will see that Deimal has taken off ten per cent. The Spalding bill, though it seems terrific, is really very moderate, as she has made over old materials in some instances and given me more than full value. Edie approved of the estimate which she has gone *under*, and not over. The shoe bill is also correct.

I don't like to confess it, but you had a very nearly naked daughter before you clad her in wedding raiment!

Many thanks and much love. I am perfectly fine, except for my pedestals.

Your devoted G.G.

Alias Winifred Holt Mather

In the spring of 1922 Winifred's brother, Roland, and Constance D'Arcy MacKay were married, much to the families' delight. From that time until Roland's death in 1931, no letters can be found from him pertaining to Lighthouse matters.

XIII

THE NON-ACADEMIC ROBE

Meetings where Winifred spoke were held in Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, and probably other places not recorded. Here is a rough manuscript of one of these talks:

The principal thing for each community to recognize is that nothing touching the blind is as important as to prevent their being blind.

Secondly, sight-saving through use of a small clinic open day and night so that blind or others with bad eyes can go after working hours and receive every possible attention and care to redeem their sight. These are essential in rescuing many who have been condemned to blindness. Fifty "blind" people left our little clinic at Lighthouse No. 1 as seeing people.

Thirdly, sight-saving by careful adjustment to books, music, and educational and other tools so as to cause the least possible eye strain to those using them.*

Next to sight-saving, the great need is to eradicate the universal mistake which friends of the blind, the world throughout, are prone to make.

* Since this was written, the talking book has come into use for the blind exclusively. It is hoped that its use will be expanded to include the poor of sight that Winifred here describes.

Good people are apt to pity the blind; this begets unreasoning kindness. We must remember the man who loved his horse so much that he fed it and rested it so excessively that he killed it by kindness. There is, of course, the other extreme, which insists that the blind must pay their way and which, sooner or later, lands them in sweat shops where they labor at piece work until age alone takes them from the mill. There is a mean between these two which recognizes four facts:

First, blindness itself does not create a class. Blindness merely emphasizes the existing personality, taste, and desires of the individual. If the light should go out here, this audience would not change. We would each one of us remain personalities with plans, pleasures, passions, ideals, and desires—we would be seeing people in the dark. That is what the blind are—seeing people in the dark until with teaching and tools they are able to find light through work.

Next, people are apt to think that blindness means physical disability and, despite splendid physical work in many organizations for them, the tendency too often is still to lead and wall up the blind and to weary them with mechanical gymnastics. The foundation of the independence of the blind rests on physical emancipation through the three F's—Fresh air, Fun, Freedom. Because blindness tends to make them immobile, our duty is to fight this difficulty by giving them

healthy graceful quick bodies in which to lodge healthy thoughts and courage. To give them the best physical equipment—swimming pools, rowing, skating, dancing, and everything which we want for the development of the sighted—is not enough; the blind should always have in their work and play, as far as possible, the interest of competition. This stimulus prevents brain fag and banishes boredom.

Third, pity and slovenly thinking too often permit the blind to subsist by such thinly disguised beggary as being paid for peddling poor products, tuneless singing, or indifferent musicianship, or for manufacturing bad handicraft. If the blind are to succeed, we must demand for them the best of everything—environment, equipment, teaching, and entertainment. And we must demand of them the best work, intellectual and manual. Things paid for or bought must not be disposed of because they appeal to the eye of charity, but because they are as good or better than the work of the sighted. Only by insisting on this can the blind receive justice and come into their own.

Fourth and last, the horizon of the blind, once pitifully limited, is daily growing. Work for them should not be fixed or final; but should include a laboratory or experiment station, an ever-present hope of finding something new and better for them to do. Every effort should be made to

make the task fit the individual and to avoid wholesale classification by groups in workshops. We should always try to choose from the ranks of the simple brush-and-broom makers, weavers, knitters, cobblers, basket makers, the individuals who may have the capacity to do something else, such as typing, stenography, telephone operating, etc.; and from these ranks we must take the individuals who can succeed as agents, teachers, professors, managers, editors, writers, lawyers, and judges.

I know that I have said much that to many seems commonplace and self-evident. Purposely have I dwelt on the commonplace and the self-evident because these things which are so commonplace and self-evident are to be found the world throughout, and until we learn to combat blindness—not as a doctor and nurse affair—but as the duty of the community, and until we learn that the blind are not the specific affair of the institute and the school and the government—but the affair of everyone—that the blind man or woman are our neighbors and that we cannot delegate and forget them, but must care what happens to them and take a personal interest in them to see that they receive the compensation of right help of every kind to restore them to their birthright of again becoming free and equal with the rest of the world, until then we have not done our duty.

New York
July 12, 1923

Beloved (Miss Rogers) :

It is a great rest to think of you on a holiday in France. I am dictating this because I have not the strength to write to anyone who can't understand a wobbly document. Entre nous, my strength has not come back to me and I have had no one but my blessed husband to help.

I have remained here to attend the executive meeting held on the 11th. The extension to the auditorium is to be built as soon as possible and the plans submitted to you. The Squirrel Cage is to be included, and the stage, at my suggestion, made movable. I consider this important because it gives us all the space on a level, should we by any chance want it, and if we do not want it, we have the stage just the same.

Last week we returned from a trip to Cornwall River Lighthouse at which all seems to be going well. Mrs. Stroock, the aunt of little Vincent Handley to whom I dedicated "The Light Which Cannot Fail," gave us her motor to go from Newburgh, where we had spent the night with her and obtained a donation of \$28 for the Cornwall Lighthouse plus quantities of felt strips with which to make mats.

Everything else was provided for, and I threatened to get the bus from Mrs. Harriman unless

they would go to her for bigger things. Mr. McLane was asked to call on her with full power to get what he could towards the workshop and the boarding house. Ezbar was very nice, and the Judge counts on him as a splendid citizen and co-operator.

My husband accepted an invitation to join the executive committee, which pleases me, and we elected Mrs. Helen Martley Jenkins to the advisory board. She is deeply interested in the blind on account of her own eyes. There—Madame! I think that I have done well for your hobby.

I am looking for a competent secretary, and if you can think of anyone at long distance who would do, send a cable, as I have not got the right person yet. I want somebody who knows stenography! This just in case you may have an inspiration. I have a book that must be gotten out and more work than I can manage.

We are looking for a furnished flat of no less than two bedrooms, two bathrooms, dining room and living room—we have glass and crockery, silver and linen. We want to get it by the month, so if you hear of anything of this sort, let us know. My husband will run down to town on the slightest provocation.

Thank you for the little anniversary present which gave us great pleasure. I have been, however, disgustingly honest and as my husband does not like the color have told Mrs. Harrison to

credit it to you, so you can give it to us for a Christmas present in the color which suits my Lord and Master!

Do not answer this letter because I do not want to take a moment from your holiday, but keep much love and every good wish from

Your devoted,
(Winifred)
Signed with a beautiful elephant

111 East 59th Street
August 1, 1924

Dear Father:

We rejoiced to receive your letter of the 28th and to feel through it all your returning health and joy in life.

Now for a surprise—Miss Rogers returns on Wednesday and on Friday we sail to see Father Mather who is ninety and wants us.

When we have paid our visit there I am most eager to have Rufus find some documents which he wants in Florence. It is his turn now, and I plan to follow my leader as much as possible; though, of course, he says it is my wedding trip and the one purpose is to get me rested and make me happy.

With love your devoted daughter,
Winifred

After a short visit in Rome, Winifred and Rufus went on to England. In a letter home in 1924 Winifred writes:

In my mirror was an invitation to attend the opening of Tudor Hall by Her Majesty, Queen Mary. The note requested guests to wear academic costume and decorations. I seized a purple velvet toque, bent it in tricorner and jammed it very low on my head. I found my decorations and an old fur, then I took my black crepe de chine peignoir with long hanging sleeves, the whole lined with crimson satin, arranged myself in it, and sped to Tudor Hall.

I descended proudly from my cab, presented the blue admittance card, and was ushered to a modest seat back of the front rows reserved for potentates. A lady arrayed quite correctly asked if she might be permitted to know what robes I was wearing: "You will not think me curious, Madam, but your robe is so beautiful and I have seen nothing else like it."

I agreed with this and told her it was a Founder's robe. Then a courtly gentleman appeared, made a low bow and said: "Madam, I think you should take a better seat than this," and escorted me to a seat among the notables. Then the band played, the Queen spoke, and we retired for refreshments.

That evening my husband asked me what I

had done during the awful weather. "Oh, I went to see the Queen in my academic robe."

"What! You haven't got any!"

"Look at it," I said, pointing to my homemade raiment.

"But don't you understand that you can't do that kind of thing in England? It isn't safe. You might have been arrested."

Of course, he was right. He is always right. But I would not have missed it even for a court-martial.

On October 28, 1924, Rufus and Winifred arrived in Paris for the dedication of the Phare by the Generalissimo of the Armies, Marshal Foch. And in 1925 the French Lighthouse was cited by the French Academy, a distinction rarely given to a philanthropic work. A year later Winifred's father passed away.

The time between Henry Holt's death in 1926, and 1929, the Mathers spent abroad in activities which Rufus summarized thusly:

Visited principal schools for the blind in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Greece, Spain, India, Java, China and Japan.

Founded in Cairo movement to conduct pioneer lay educational campaign to prevent blindness in Egypt, including financing production of film showing causes of blindness and its

prevention. Copies of this film will be shown in Syria, Turkey, India, Straits Settlements, China, Japan, etc.

Founded in Calcutta pioneer lay educational national campaign to prevent blindness in India, under presidency of Chief Justice of Bengal; also auxiliary movement for same purpose in Burma.

In Singapore and Shanghai initiated movement to train the blind. Because of our visit, efforts to prevent blindness in Straits Settlements will be intensified and a census of the blind will be made.

In Canton, China, founded Lighthouse No. 10.

Our next trip, which took all of the year, covered Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Jamaica and Cuba. This time we were under much better auspices. We told the Hon. Henry L. Stimson, then Secretary of State, what we planned to do. He was much interested, particularly as he knew that we paid all our own expenses and represented no one but ourselves; he said that he would gladly have the proper State Department officials write to our embassies and consulates that he was personally interested in our mission and that he would appreciate it if they would do all that their positions would permit to facilitate it and make it a success. We thereupon wrote ahead to each embassy requesting them to have ready copies of any laws for the prevention of blindness and to put us in touch with any schools for the blind, or other agencies

working for them, in Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Santiago, Lima and Havana, and to the Consul in Kingston, Jamaica. When we arrived in these cities we found that every door opened for us.

We took along a film, showing the work and play of the Perkins Institution for the Blind, Watertown, Mass., which was loaned to us by Director Edward E. Allen. This film showed the blind sprinting, high and broad jumping, sliding downhill on sleds, and playing. Dr. Allen also authorized us to urge young men and women, sighted or blind and with a good understanding of English, to make application to him for scholarships to the Harvard Class for Training Teachers of the Blind—a course of his own creation and directed by him. All over the world are graduates of this course who have been inspired by Dr. Allen's spirit, his sympathetic and practical understanding of the blind, and his methods gained from many years of teaching.

I had my standard lecture on Prevention of Blindness translated into Spanish. Winifred, who was to cover the modern treatment and education of the blind, planned to speak in English or French.

What were the definite results of our visit to those six countries?

In Chile, Lighthouse work was got underway. Three people have since come up from South

America to take Dr. Allen's Harvard course. Returning to their countries they undoubtedly will cultivate the seeds already sown and their influence should do much to modernize and amplify work for the blind. In Cuba, the school for the blind was enlarged and a Lighthouse built. In 1931 we visited Puerto Rico, where the School for Blind Children of San Juan agreed to take on Lighthouse work. In Bermuda we recruited a partially-blind, 16-year-old for The Perkins Institution, who later returned to Bermuda as a successful chiropracter. Everywhere we went we enjoyed good public meetings which resulted in invaluable publicity. All in all, the effort was worthwhile, and more and more light should eventually find its way to our blind neighbors in the South.

The remainder of 1932 we spent in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Austria. In our talks in these six capitals we stressed the need for lay campaigns for the prevention of blindness. We endeavored to bring about combinations of existing works or to create new work to carry out the program of Lighthouse activities.

Everywhere we went we were greatly indebted for the kindness and able help of our government's representatives and of many blind and seeing friends.

Besides urging the application for scholar-

ships for qualified students for Dr. Allen's course, we also offered in each country Mather Scholarships for the study of the activities of Lighthouse No. 1 in New York, as well as promises to give a financial cornerstone to help the creation of Lighthouse work. Only Vienna has qualified, out of the six capitals visited this year, for this gift, as work there was actually started by the Lighthouse of Austria before we left. We believe, however, that Lighthouse work will develop in other countries where we were privileged to sow Lighthouse seed.

XIV

A KING, A QUEEN, A DUCE

The pageant which Winifred and her young niece saw at their presentation to King George and Queen Mary in May of 1932 was of far greater beauty and interest than either had dreamed. Rufus, however, insisted that King George's levee at St. James Palace, which he was privileged to see, outstripped the great experience at Buckingham Palace in stateliness and color. Nevertheless, the women scored a point because they were allowed to wear thin silk stockings and pretty shiny slippers, while the Lord Chamberlain insisted that Dr. Joseph Colt Bloodgood's and Rufus' legs be encased in cotton stockings beneath the black silk ones, lest a glimpse of carnal flesh should shock. Winifred wrote to her aunts:

We were put into our motor, my niece wearing a red and gold Indian coat, and I a Chinese blue and gold Palace coat, at half past five in the afternoon. We had a Rolls-Royce with a footman and chauffeur which the porter at the Sesame Club had discovered for us, and the turnout happily looked as if we had always had it.

To our chagrin, the courtier who greeted us said that only three more might enter the throne

room. The three before us passed on and it looked as though we might not be admitted for hours. But finally we were admitted and suddenly I found myself directly before the Queen. I curtseyed, looking at her. Two steps more, and another curtsey before his Majesty, who bowed with friendly dignity. Then, to my consternation, I found that the little American who had made her bow before me, had scurried out of the room like a scared rabbit, leaving me about fifteen feet in her wake. It was a difficult maneuver to exit unhurriedly and my niece said that as I did it, she exclaimed: "Is it over? It can't be possible."

Afterwards, in the ante-room, I struck up conversation with a handsomely-bedecked Guardsman. Somehow we got onto cannibalism in Scotland and then to the ancient practice under which British husbands had sold their wives. He was perspiring freely above his stiff, high golden collar and I said something about the long wait to be presented and how it had been so worthwhile. He replied: "Yes, you see it for the first time; but we are always here every court session."

Then, when the royal procession, including the Prince of Wales, had passed by, we retired to the supper room. I wanted to capture and keep a little blonde cake with three brown Prince of Wales feathers decorating it, but I was forced to yield it to a Duchess who did not appreciate it.

Rufus continued:

While in Rome in 1934 we had our second interview with Mussolini. This was a far different one from that of six years before. In 1928 we had arranged to see Mussolini through his English teacher. Il Duce then had his office in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in an enormous room empty of furniture with the exception of a huge flat-topped desk in one corner. Back of it was a hanging, probably covering an alcove in which was concealed a bodyguard. As we approached, we saw that the dictator looked tired and unshaved, and that he wore a mussed business suit. The whole point of this visit was merely to thank Mussolini for having indorsed our Italo-American Lighthouse as honorary president.

When the time came for us to leave, he seemed a little puzzled because we had asked nothing of him. "But is there nothing I can do? I am the head of the state and shall be very glad to do it." Winifred thanked him again, saying: "Nothing. Perhaps you will understand better when we tell you that we are imbeciles or, if you prefer, idealists." "Then," said Mussolini, "I, too, am an imbecile." Such was his estimate of himself in 1928. But an insight into his egocentricity was afforded us as we left the ante-room—an usher gave us a large, autographed photo of the Duce.

Now it was 1934. This time our errand consisted in trying to persuade Mussolini that the

Italian Union of the Blind should take over the Italian Lighthouse, maintain its charter and support it in perpetuum. For this visit we went to the huge Palazzo Venezia; from its balcony the Duce often spoke to great crowds of fanatical Fascists gathered in the large square below.

Arriving at the appointed hour, we were ushered into a far different room from the severe simplicity of the one in the Palazzo Chigi. But at the far corner was the same enormous desk with nothing on it. We saw a stouter and balder Mussolini, with a hardboiled expression. He greeted us courteously enough and we all sat down. (On the first occasion he had stood throughout the interview.) At first he was most uncooperative, but we finally mentioned that former Secretary Stimson would be sorry to hear of his attitude. In a moment his expression changed (Mr. Stimson had visited him in 1933 and Mussolini had taken a great liking to him), he signed the necessary papers without more ado.

Winifred then asked: "Excellency, does that constitute a promise?" "Yes," he replied. "May we hope that it will be lived up to?" "You may," he answered. Winifred then reminded him of their previous conversation in which he had acknowledged being an idealist or "imbecile." His face showed that he recalled it but that he didn't want to be reminded of it. He simply said shortly, in French: "One says many things."

XV

THE ORIENT

Sailing from San Francisco in March 1936, we spent part of a day in Honolulu, enabling us to visit the Work Shop for the Blind which was doing very good work indeed in its own modern building. Our previous visit, in late June of 1929, evidently had borne good fruit!

Late that afternoon we sailed for Japan, and on docking at Yokohama, on the 16th of April, we found waiting our dear friend, Dr. Gilbert Bowles, head of the Friends Mission School in Tokyo, in addition to a delegation of blind and their teachers from the Rev. Gideon Draper's Christian School for the Blind in Yokohama. A very picturesque group it was, including two blind girls who had attended Dr. Allen's class at Harvard and who were now teaching in the school. We were put into automobiles and driven away to Tokyo.

A few days later we set out to meet another fine co-worker, a Mr. Takeo Iwahashi who had invited us especially to come for the inauguration of the first Lighthouse for the Blind in Japan, which he had built in Osaka as a result of our talks with him seven years before. After a beautiful trip through the heart of Japan, we arrived

at Osaka, where Mr. Iwahashi and his wonderful wife warmly welcomed us. That evening after dinner, a group of oculists came to call on us and we discussed with them questions referring to the prevention of blindness.

On April 23 Mr. Iwahashi and his wife took us to the inaugural ceremony of the Osaka Lighthouse. Although we had previously seen pictures of the Lighthouse, we were nevertheless amazed to find out in detail how marvelously Mr. Iwahashi had grasped the Lighthouse idea in the building. There were the large assembly hall, work rooms of various kinds, and, to our especial delight, a club room. After the inevitable tea drinking, we repaired to the assembly hall where, after members of the city government had murmured nice things to us, we gave our usual talks on the prevention of blindness and justice for the blind. Everyone seemed keenly interested. A very picturesque part of the ceremony was an old blind man singing ancient songs and accompanying himself on the koto. Finally, the keys of the Lighthouse were presented to Winifred, who then handed them over to Mr. Iwahashi. This opening ceremony will remain as one of the most memorable episodes of our lives. We had the very happy feeling that, with the construction of the Osaka Lighthouse, a new horizon for the blind had been opened which would in time extend to other parts of Japan.

The next day we all went to Kobe by automobile to attend a public meeting. There was a good-sized audience, including representatives of the city government, and our talks were very enthusiastically received as was the showing of the Perkins film. We were promised that some day there would be a Lighthouse in Kobe.

We arrived back in Kyoto tired, but not too tired to take a dinner in Japanese style with our friends the Iwahashis and a representative of the Ittoen sect, a remarkable group whose object is to do good secretly. Nothing could have been more charming than this little dinner at which we were treated virtually as family guests by the proprietress of the restaurant and a most attractive staff of little waitresses.

The next morning we paid a courtesy visit to the prefecture offices and went to see the Ittoen Village. Mr. Nishida Tenko, founder of the Ittoen groups, explained the principles of their quiet service for which they expect no reward. Many Ittoens have accepted Christianity because they feel that its teachings and practices coincide very closely with their own ideas of life. Mr. Nishida added that he wanted to give some land to start a Lighthouse for the blind in Kyoto and others told us that there would be Lighthouse work in that city.

We visited a Buddhist organization called The Eyes of Buddha, which takes care of a number

of blind people. We were most courteously received by the Buddhist Priests and spoke briefly to an audience composed largely of blind. From there we went to the University, the Doshisha, where we talked in their large lecture hall but were unable to show the film. The culmination of the day came with a dinner given to us by the Municipality of Kyoto. Representatives of the city government and many social workers were present and there was informal discussion.

After visits to Tokyo, Nikko, Yokohama, Miyanoshita, Kyoto, and Nara, with its famous deer park decorated by hundreds of stone lanterns and innumerable temples, we arrived in Osaka again. The next evening we gave a farewell dinner to Mr. Iwahashi and his wife, representatives of social works, and the press. It pleased us intensely that, in the little addresses of our Japanese friends, they stated that our visit had been of real value in promoting good understanding between Japan and our country and that it had opened the eyes of the seeing public to their responsibility to prevent blindness. A member of an organization in Nara said that he had been so much impressed by the talks we had given during our first visit to Osaka, that his organization had made a considerable money donation to the Lighthouse in Osaka to carry out its ideals and that he felt that Nara should also organize Lighthouse work. During the dinner, Mr. Iwahashi

announced that we had presented to the Lighthouse of Osaka a Kodak-size copy of the Perkins Institute film. He thought that it would be of the utmost assistance for the public to see with their own eyes the result of the best training given the young blind in the United States.

Kobe, Japan
May 27, 1936

Dear Edie:

We sail on the Choan Maru on the 29th for China, and unless our plans alter take the good ship Yasukumi Maru, NYK line, from Shanghai, on the 30th of June, remaining on board until a little to our chagrin she deposits us at Marseilles on July 29th or 30th. Unfortunately, this was the only choice, and the quickest and best way to meet you. Just how we will proceed to join you at Salzburg is on the knees of the Gods. Possibly we will go directly to Carlsbad, which I advocate for Rufus but if he is too obstreperous we may remain in Innsbruck until it is time to descend on you.

The account of our philanthropies has been written and will soon be forwarded to you if I get time to overhaul it. We had a wonderful goodbye dinner from friends, Quakers, Buddhists, Christians, Japanese, and Ittoens, and members of the press, the Municipality, etc., nineteen in

all. The speeches were wonderful and we enjoyed ourselves thoroughly. Nevertheless, it was lovely to come here the following morning from Osaka to this tranquil, on the whole, good hotel with a garden backed by lovely wooded hills. After hearing the splash of waterfalls and basking in the sunshine for two days, we can understand why the Japanese are perhaps the most perfect depictees of rain and its beauty. The rainy season has begun and is not likely to stop until the middle of July. This makes the prospect of the Inland Sea and the Yellow Sea more alluring, and having done all the good that we feel we can here at present it will be wonderful to be once more in China.

Your devoted,
Winifred

Pekin, China
June 4, 1936

Dear Edie:

We are now in the midst of our Chinese endeavors, but it is too early to prophecy what will happen. We can but watch and pray and seize every possible opening.

We spent an hour with the ambassador, whom we found very simple, erudite, and sincere. His first secretary, Mr. Merrill, was a sealed book but both he and the ambassador seemed to be more or

less won over and made helpful suggestions. At half past three Mr. Merrill and his car took us to the Rockefeller Institute where we met Dr. Kronfeld who knew Beppie (Dr. Bloodgood) and, of course, admired him. That probably contributed towards our considering the interview an entirely successful one. We will hear from Dr. Kronfeld again, although the home office would not allow the Rockefeller Foundation to work with us. He will give us his moral support and serve on any board should such be organized.

Action is speeding up. The Rockefeller Foundation gives a reception for us on the 15th. We speak to a chosen audience afterwards at what they call the Peking Union Medical College and the Chinese call the Rockefeller Hospital. Then they will probably make arrangements for us to go to Nanking, the capital. There is a great deal of unrest but no danger. Changes will doubtless occur which will quietly put power more and more in the hands of the people whom we have just left. The medical board and educational board will probably remain as they are, an integral and important part of the government. Hence, our best chance is in the capital where the chiefs of these departments are.

We are starting modestly to be dined and wined. Alice has made some friends who are having us all three to lunch and dinner, and the great are beginning to call. This must catch

Sunday's post to Siberia so no more for the present.

Love,
Winifred

In Peking a public meeting was arranged in the large hall of the Peking (Rockefeller) Medical School. There was a good-sized audience despite the fierce heat.

We had planned after Peking to spend two days campaigning at Nanking. A few days before we were to start, the telephone rang and a voice said: "I am Dr. John B. Grant of the Rockefeller Foundation. May I have a talk with you?" We went down to the lobby and Dr. Grant said to us, "I know all about you and your work. It is much needed in China. I understand that you plan to campaign in Nanking. I am going there tonight and will prepare the way for you. If I do, will you give three days instead of two to that city?" We replied that we would be very glad to do so.

The next day we received a telegram from the Nanking hospital head saying we would be very welcome and that he hoped we would spend three days. Winifred answered that we would, and a day or two later we entrained. Arriving at the north bank of the Yangtze River (there is no railroad bridge, the cars being ferried over), we were met by a charming little Cantonese lady and a medical colleague, both of whom spoke excellent English. The little lady proved to be Dr.

H. H. Huang, who had won her degree from the Peking Medical School and who now had an important position in Nanking's Health Service. They said that we were to leave the train with our bags and cross over to the city by the first ferry to avoid the long delay before our car was ferried over. We grew to be particularly fond of Dr. Huang, a brilliant, able, and delightful woman.

The next day we had an interview with Madame Chiang Kai-shek. Madame's slim figure, encased in pure white, made her seem even taller than she was, and her face displayed an aura of charm, dignity, and ability. She greeted us warmly in a rich, low-pitched voice and we talked about prevention of blindness (particularly for children) and explained our ideas of a national movement in China to prevent unnecessary blindness and to broaden the horizon of the blind. "What you say interests me very much," she said. "Once when the Generalissimo and I were traveling in a remote part of the country, we arrived at a town where the only possible proper lodging was the American Mission. On arriving there, we found that the missionary and his wife had gone on an inspection tour of other missions and had left a number of blind girls in charge. During our stay of a few days, they cooked for us, and looked after us, and I read the Bible to them."

Winifred then asked that, if a national move-

ment were started, would she be Honorary President of it. She said, "Will you pardon me if I speak to my secretary in Chinese?" "Of course," we replied. After a short conversation with the secretary, she said to us, "You understand that, with my many responsibilities, I could take little if any active part, but, with that understanding, I shall be very glad to give my name as Hon. President and will do what I can to use the Generalissimo's New Life Movement to initiate the Lighthouse idea." Given this promise, we soon left, feeling grateful to this extraordinary woman.

In Shanghai we were able to arouse a great deal of interest and it was agreed that a Shanghai Committee to promote the prevention of blindness and the welfare of the blind would be formed as a branch of the National Committee headed by Madame Chiang Kai-shek. So we were able to leave with a feeling of satisfaction.

XVI

WORLD WAR II

Back home again, Winifred, from 1937 until her death in 1945, largely forsook globe wanderings in the interests of the blind to concentrate on her correspondence and local Lighthouse affairs. The death in 1940 of Dr. John Finley, the Lighthouse president who had also been president of the first New York Commission for the Blind, was a deep sorrow. Dr. Allen's 80th birthday had to be properly celebrated and war work by the blind needed development. The following extracts are from a long article in the New York Herald Tribune of Jan. 4, 1942:

"The 4,000 blind registrants of the New York Association for the Blind's Lighthouse at 111 East 59th Street are rallying to the call for total civilian mobilization for war.

"They are to be registered in the division for the handicapped of the recently Federalized State Employment Service and are to be placed in jobs, defense or otherwise, that may result from manpower shortage. In this way the blind can contribute organized service in the skilled jobs which they are able to perform and in releasing other workers for more active service.

“Their acute touch and hearing enable them to perform with a high degree of efficiency such tasks as the manufacture of gun casings, measuring powder for bullets, operating complicated switchboards and filling in at air-attack listening posts.

“The Lighthouse also plans to assist in the rehabilitation of soldiers and civilians who have been blinded by war wounds and to cooperate with the Office of Production Management to determine to what extent it can help in the rehabilitation program. The program represents a step forward from the policy of the first World War and post war years, when the potentialities of such casualties were largely neglected and blind persons became burdens either to their families or to the state.

“The Association’s workshop at 338 East 35th Street has filled in the first eleven months of the current year \$174,000 worth of Government contracts for brooms, mops, and pillowcases for the Army.”

All-India Lighthouse for the Blind
Calcutta, India
Jan. 17, 1942

Dear Mrs. Mather:

I hope you will be able to recall me when I say that I am a blind scholar from India who

spent two years in the United States studying up-to-date methods for helping the blind.

After my return to Calcutta in 1940, I succeeded in introducing a course at the University here for training teachers to work with the blind. This is the first time in the educational history of India that a college has incorporated such a subject in its curriculum. Then about six months ago, I founded the first Indian Lighthouse.

In June or July next we shall be holding the first anniversary exercises. As you are the founder of the original Lighthouse, my committee and I shall feel very much obliged if you would kindly send a message to be read on this occasion. It will give us a lot of encouragement and inspiration.

Yours sincerely,
S. C. Roy

Williamstown, Mass.
Jan. 12, 1943

Beloved (Miss Rogers):

Need I tell you, who have been close to my heart's desires for so long, that to help China is one of our dearest wishes.

You may remember that Madame Chiang Kai-shek assumed the presidency of our Lighthouse work in China, and that at parting she

sent me a little fan, perhaps as token of her love for the blind. She told me that she would do anything in her power for them, and I believe she will.

She is now at Harkness Pavilion, The Presbyterian Hospital, New York. I have been told that her sisters, Madame Kung and Madame Sun Yat Sen, are in attendance. It will probably be very hard to get to Madame Chiang, so will you select the loveliest white, woven thing you can find at the Lighthouse, for the shoulders of an invalid, or to throw over her, have it put in the loveliest box, for which I will pay, and send it with the enclosed letter, by hand, to Madame. The card should be enclosed with the gift. Please don't use one of those horrible cards with the child's head.

I am hoping that when she is convalescent she will go to the Lighthouse, which would be a great feather in our cap. Should she signify sufficiently in advance her intention of going, I would try to get to New York for the occasion, but as I don't see now how that would be possible, the honor of welcoming her would probably fall to you and the other officers.

I don't want to die until there is a National Lighthouse in China, so please do all in your power to get my letter to Madame Chiang Kai-shek.

I feel that I did not thank you for all your trouble in getting the last shipment of Lighthouse products here. The little blue shawl seems to me

bunchy, too heavy, and not graceful. Perhaps the fringe is unbecoming; it should be thinner, and the little tassels perhaps more frequent. Anyway, the finishing seems to me poor. It is not good enough for the Lighthouse. I am sending it to you by this post because I think that you should see it, and find out if we can't do better. I know we can.

I have not overcome my chronic objection to troubling you, but I count on your tried friendship to secure prompt and satisfactory action for my letter and my little gift to Madame Chiang. Much love from us both, and let us know how the three sisters are.

Affectionately,
Winifred

At the 36th Annual Meeting, on March 11, 1943, of the New York Association for the Blind, Mr. Walter Hoving, then President of Lord & Taylor, delivered an address called "What the Businessman Can Do for the Blind." Because the burden of that message is still so pertinent, a summary of it is here included:

"Up to the other day I was not a very good friend of the blind, partly because of ignorance about them. We all like to feel that we are understanding in certain things, but I discovered something when I was asked to come here to say a

few words. It kicked me into doing one thing. I came to visit the Lighthouse and the factory. I had a most stimulating and profitable morning. I found that instead of the people there being blind. I was the person who was blind. The methods of teaching that have been developed at the Lighthouse could well be used in many, many institutions of other kinds with great profit. It was most stimulating to be in the factory and to see the men and women working on the looms, making mops and brooms, singing at their work, calling to each other and talking away in happy voices. There were nice-looking girls sitting at sewing machines which had been made harmless by all sorts of devices so that the operators would not make some mistake which might cause an accident.

“Looking at statistics of the fine work the Lighthouse has done these many years, I can hardly let this occasion go by without offering you my humble congratulations for the marvelous job which this institution in Manhattan has accomplished. This marvelous work makes me feel as a businessman that there are so many things we can learn from an institution like this.

“Mr. Henry Ford in Detroit has shown a remarkable example to everyone, employing, as Miss Keller told you, over 1200* blind people in the River Rouge plant alone. Thomas J. Watson

* Blind is used mistakenly for handicapped, including blind.

is another employer of the blind, the only other person I know of who is a large-scale employer of blind people. In New York City, if you subtract the people the Lighthouse itself employs and has found work for at newsstands and in its factory, you have a little more than 100 people employed by industry and business.

“In my own company we never thought of employing the blind. We should have made it our business to look into it. As soon as I left the Lighthouse the other day, I got some of our personnel men together and said: ‘Now look—we must do something about this.’

“It seems to me that every business should employ at least one blind person to every 1000, which means that we at Lord & Taylor’s should employ four blind people. Smaller concerns may not have the diversification of occupation which would permit employment on so large a scale. However, in the case of larger concerns if there is any virtue in division of labor, it is that they can find a place for people who are handicapped in one way or another. We in our Company can find jobs for them. It is perhaps a little more trouble to employ handicapped persons. In our company we have employed a great many deaf mutes, doing packing. We found that we had to organize our work a little differently than with people who could hear and speak, but after this very short period of adjustment, we found them

to be wonderfully successful, efficient and capable workers. If businessmen will only take the trouble, we can surely find many jobs that the blind can do and do equally well. Let us hope that businessmen all over New York will plan to use handicapped labor. Now—more than ever—it is important because there will be many war-blinded, many without arms and legs. It is the responsibility of the business organizations of this country to take over the load. It would be a crime to expect our boys to come back and be thrown upon public or private charity. How can we expect from them a healthy viewpoint if they are placed in hospitals and institutions on a government subsidy. Now when business needs labor so badly is the time to organize ways of employing the handicapped so that we have a place ready for those handicapped by the war. What we are fighting for would hardly be worth while if they who fight for us and in so doing join the handicapped, have nothing to look forward to but charity.”

These two articles appeared in the Lighthouse News, Nov. 1943:

Lighthouse Rays

Ten marchers from the Lighthouse, eight blind and two sighted, joined the New York War Bond

parade on Tuesday, September 28th, keeping up a brisk pace with the 101st U. S. Cavalry Band. Lillian Hillman and Ruth Askenas marched with their Seeing Eye dogs. *The New York Herald Tribune* made the following comment: "A Contingent of Norwegian seaman and a detachment of French sailors and a group of representatives of the Lighthouse with their Seeing Eye dogs were among the most popular of the marchers."

Blind Man Harvests Victory Garden

Thaddeus Radwanski, born in Poland and educated in the universities of Warsaw and Odessa, worked in this country as a journalist until two year ago when he became blind. After a year in the hospital trying to save his sight, he came to the Lighthouse to learn to read and write Braille.

Gardening was something else Mr. Radwanski wanted to prove to himself he could do without sight. For his victory garden he prepared the soil, placed the plants in the earth, and tended them faithfully until harvest time. He would allow no one else to go near his garden. Tomatoes, corn, sunflowers, muskmelons and watermelons were the crops he raised.

A summary of the war efforts of the blind for 1943:

1. Bourne Workshop—54% of production consisted of war orders for brooms, mops and pillow cases.
2. Blind war workers in 10 war plants—manufacturing products for Army and Navy; they work making spark plugs, testing precision instruments, splitting and gauging mica for radio condensers, inspecting and testing radio receivers and transmitters, splicing rope for debarkation nets and Army medical tents.
3. Occupational workers at the Lighthouse—do a home front job inserting and tying strings for paper shopping bags, thus releasing sighted workers in unessential industry for war production.
4. Other craft workers have created two new wartime products—(a) bicycle basket, and (b) market basket.
5. Lighthouse staff members have been selling war bonds and stamps since Pearl Harbor.
6. Knitting for the Red Cross.
7. First Aid and Home Nursing Courses—the original aim of these courses was to be ready in case of air raids, but now, with our doctor and nurse shortage, these blind women in many cases can take the place of nurses.

March 27, 1944

Dear Judge Goddard:

As the mother of the New York Association for the Blind, it is a sorrow for me to be held in these snowy hills and not be able to accept your kind invitation to take part in the Annual Meeting. I find it in my heart, however, to send my husband's and my greetings to the officers, the crew, and the passengers of Lighthouse No. 1, and if you will bear with me, to emphasize three points which have grown steadily in importance with my long experience of Lighthouse keeping around the world.

First, there is no cure for blindness but prevention; hence the fundamental plan of every Lighthouse should be a tireless effort, as far as possible, to save sight and to stop blindness.

Next, our struggle must be incessant to educate the seeing public to understand the blind and to realize the truth that blindness is not the heaviest burden of the blind, but the attitude of the seeing world toward them.

Last, the Lighthouse has tried to appeal to the business sense and fair play of the public, not to its sentimentality. The work for, and of, the blind must be of the best to compete with the seeing. We seek justice, not charity, for the blind. It is our privilege to help them in every way to take whenever possible, their honorable, useful, and happy place in the seeing world.

With profound gratitude and appreciation of what you, the officers, the staff, and our blind friends are achieving to bring light, independence and joy to the blind, I am,

Sincerely and gratefully yours,
Winifred Holt Mather
Honorary Secretary and Founder

The Honorable Henry Warren Goddard
Chairman of Lighthouse No. 1
111 E. 59th Street, New York, N. Y.

New York Times, March 31, 1944:

BIG INCREASE SEEN IN NUMBER OF BLIND

Col. Greear Says Many are Hurt
In Army Training Program

Soldiers have been blinded not only in the battle areas but from injuries accidentally incurred in the Army's extensive training program, Lieut. Col. James N. Greear, Jr. of the Valley Forge General Hospital declared here yesterday.

Addressing the thirty-seventh annual meeting of the New York Association for the Blind, Colonel Greear predicted that the number of men blinded in this war would be "far in excess" of that of the first World War.

The meeting, held at the Association's Light-

house headquarters, 111 East Fifty-ninth Street, had for its guest of honor Archbishop Francis J. Spellman, a vice-president of the Association.

In his annual report Judge Henry W. Goddard, chairman of the board, said that there were enrolled in the Association 4,084 blind persons, of which 445 came to the Lighthouse for the first time in 1943. The Association is the largest employer of blind workers in the United States, having paid during the last year \$153,369 in wages.

Thomas S. McLane, treasurer, reported that income and expenditures had reached \$1,000,000 for the first time in the history of the Association. In discussing the kind of work a blind person can do, Stanley Wartenberg, blind employment supervisor, said that 20 per cent of the city's blind populations are now employed.

Paris

Nov. 20, 1944

Dear Gardienne:

Day before yesterday I went to the Phare for old times' sake, and with you very much in mind. I saw the present "Directress," who seemed to me a little *distracte*. However, she was very pleasant and showed me about. The imprimerie has not been used since 1940; the knitting shop has been transformed into a clinic to receive patients

for massage (and is not in use at present) ; the library has been cleaned out so as to take in refugees, and there is one family still left. In other words, there are naturally many changes. Most of the men are civilian cases, though often the result of war-caused injuries. There appear to be between forty and fifty of them in residence. Over the mantel in the hall there is your photograph, with the Phare charter, or whatever it should be termed, hanging beneath, and photographs of Poincaré and Wilson below that, one on each side. Then on the mantel itself is an American flag flanked by two French ones. I was told that these three flags were never at any time disturbed and that the central one is probably the only American flag in France which remained unmolested in its rightful place throughout the occupation. The whole place seemed shabby and a little dreary; yet certainly it continues to be of use to the blind—people were coming in and out, there were blind men about, and I could see that even though the place may be slowed up the Phare is still, to some extent at least, a centre and a support to the blind. I thought you would be interested in hearing this. And now I have no room for personal news, except to say that I have been here in France four weeks, with the American Red Cross. My best to you both.

Always affectionately,

(Signed) "R."

Williamstown, Mass.
Jan. 27, 1945

Dear Miss Rogers:

I am all curled up with "the misery" at the thought of the celebration on the 22nd, but Rufus, always right, called my attention to the truth that it would be purely selfish for me to say that to anybody else, and that I must get on the bandwagon enthusiastically. So be it!

Am I to speak and, if so, for how long? And what do you want me to say? Am I to write something in the report and, if so, how long and what do you want me to say?

My dear husband has practically recovered his health, though we are neither of us yet strong enough to stand the hurly-burly of war-time New York, which has become a terrific place. We make occasional sallies, however, and, as I indicate, expect to be at the Annual Meeting of the Lighthouse on March 22.

You will be glad, I know, that the Harvard University Press has enthusiastically accepted my husband's book on Archive Research, entitled "Excavating Buried Treasure," and I hope that it will be out before long. Of course, I was conscious of his rare scholarship, but it makes me very happy to have the experts write that "he is a great scholar."

Affectionately,
Winifred

On March 27, 1945, before a packed Carnegie Hall, the Bourne Workshop for the Blind received the "E" Award of the Army and Navy for merit. So Winifred won her greatest triumph. From the beginning of her work in New York, she had contended that the work of the blind could compete on its merits with that of the sighted. Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke, after which the decoration was conferred by the world-renowned blind Marine Sergeant of Guadalcanal fame, Albert A. Schmid. Winifred was the last to speak. I shall never forget how beautiful, proud, and happy she looked. Disregarding the amplifier she spoke for four minutes, her beautiful voice carrying clearly to every part of the Hall:

"Our work exists because of great friends and great love.

"A blind man is a seeing man with all his wits and abilities sitting helpless in the dark until he is given the tools to dig his way out. Blind men and women have dug their way out to the light. Today the Government congratulates them, as it would soldiers who have won out against heavy odds.

"This is a joyful day! Compare it with what my sister Edith and my brother Roland, in whose home the Lamp of the Lighthouse was first lit, found then. There were two schools in the State of New York, many of their pupils graduating immediately into homes suited only for the aged,

or the poorhouse. They were usually physically and mentally unfit to qualify for a job. Seven blind men were employed making brooms at an Industrial Home for the Blind in Brooklyn. Others lived in asylums, poorhouses, and even in prisons. The forgotten blind spent their lives behind the prison walls of their blindness, without hope.

“We started a pioneer independent work shop in 42nd Street. (Now the workers of the Bourne Shop receive the “E” Award for their contribution toward winning the war. The Shop earned \$681,000 last year.) My sister lengthened the list of 300 to 9,585 cases reported blind, and took detailed statistics from 6,000 cases. This showed the condition of and need for the Prevention of Blindness and Justice to the Blind.

“Now began the difficult task of educating the seeing public about the possibilities of the blind. The first great milestone in this progress was the Blind Workers Exhibition organized by the Lighthouse, held at the Metropolitan Opera House for ten days, and opened by the President of the United States. President Taft had had his eyes opened to the possibilities of the blind, and when he asked me what I wanted him to do, I asked him to come to New York to open a great industrial Exhibition which would show what the blind could do. That exhibition was a shot heard around the world. It opened up new life for the blind.

The President came and for ten days blind athletes and blind actors, sent by one of the greatest living friends of the blind, Dr. Allen, gave unforgettable object lessons: a blind man sent radio messages; a blind barber shaved trusting citizens. When I asked that grand friend of the blind, Mr. Choate, to let the blind artist shave him, a smile illumined his beautiful, classic, clean-shaven face as he pleaded, 'Oh, please send a substitute with a thick stubby beard.'

"With a fair chance, the blind can do pretty much what the seeing can do, if we will give them a hand up. We can't tell how many blind we'll have in this war or what great missionaries they may become to the seeing. Blindness itself does not change a human being, except that it can give him a new urge to make the most of himself. It often turns a commonplace person into a great person, like the blind Postmaster-General of England, Fawcett, who gave us Parcel Post, Post Savings, cheap telegrams, revised the finances of India and preserved England's beautiful forests as an inspiration for the seeing.

"In the fogs of London the blind have turned a pretty penny as guides for the seeing. They have done splendid work as substitute nurses in the hospitals, reading Braille to the sick and wounded. The list of what we owe to the blind is a long one, and often shows that when the see-

ing man is helpless, the blind man can be his guide.

“A thoughtless person interrupted a blind philosopher, sitting in a dark room, absorbed in his great work, with ‘Let me get a light—you’re sitting here in the dark.’ The scholar answered gently: ‘Oh, but you forget that for us it is always light.’ God grant that this may soon become true for the world—that over agony, darkness, and blindness we may find lasting light and victory. For we walk and win by faith and not by sight.”

This was Winifred's last public utterance on the subject nearest her heart. Shortly after she and her husband returned to their home in Williamstown, Mass., Winifred was hospitalized at the House of Mercy in Pittsfield. There, on June 14, 1945, after devoting more than 40 years of her life to the cause of the blind, she died after a brief illness.

ADDENDA

Rufus received scores of letters of sympathy from people prominent in work for the blind. The most beautiful of all was this letter from Helen Keller:

Westport, Conn.
June 16, 1945

Dear Mr. Mather:

Shocked by the news of your bereavement, I feel most tenderly for and with you. In the presence of so sacred a sorrow only love can speak, and out of that love comes this letter.

It does not seem possible that she has stepped outside earth's portal, who has all these years been your life companion, and with whom you have beautifully collaborated for our blind fellow-creatures. My own deprivation, when Anne Sullivan Macy left me peculiarly alone for the second time in the silent dark, interprets your loss to my heart. But in another sense we can never be really alone. As the mists of anguish lift from your eyes, I am sure you will realize how those who have been most precious to our lives return to us not only in spiritual nearness but also in memories and inspirations—dear, familiar paths by which we shall find our way back to the communion we knew.

What a touching remembrance I have of Wini-

fred Holt in all her young beauty and artistic activity dedicating herself to the cause of the blind, and fearless perseverance with which she and her few staunch co-workers dispelled prejudice and public indifference until they laid the cornerstone of the New York Lighthouse. Truly the sightless will rise up and call her blessed, because that watch-tower has been part of all movements to restore them to useful lives and human comradeship. The progress of the blind everywhere is the one fitting memorial to her as a courageous pioneer, a noble citizen of the world and a personal friend who, as she once told me, looked upon them as her eternal jewels.

Another contribution of Mrs. Mather which I gratefully recall is to the modern view of blindness and the chances of victory over it. Forty-two years ago, it appeared that the blind were shut out forever from the cheerful ways of normal life and large service, As you know, they were trained only for a few trades and handicrafts on a limited scale and taught to labor apart in patient fortitude. They were not regarded as capable of attaining their full stature as self-reliant human beings. Today the new optimism, which Mrs. Mather taught despite bitter sarcasm, accepts them not as hopeless victims of fate or the Divine Wrath but rather as men and women who by developing other faculties intensively and having faith in themselves can achieve creative citizenship.

Yes, Mr. Mather, her name is written in the Book of Remembrance upon which God's Eye most frequently looks and in the annals of deliverance by which the blind and all other disabled groups shall become transfigured members of His New Humanity.

Miss Thomson sends her heartfelt sympathy with mine. Confident that your strong soul and the sense of all the good you have wrought will sustain you, I am,

Admiringly yours,
Helen Keller

AN INTERPRETATION

By R. G. M.

Winifred Holt had a compelling personality, so marked that when she entered a room all looked at her. She was beautiful and charming, always dressed becomingly, yet picturesquely.

All who came in contact with her knew that she had rare vision, idealism, and marked sincerity, and was wholly selfless in her work for the blind. They also knew her as a great organizer and notable public speaker, who used beautiful English and could project it to every seat in the now destroyed Hippodrome, which seated five thousand people. When she spoke in Carnegie Hall in March 1945, when the "E" Award was given to the workshop of the New York Association for the Blind, all the others who spoke used the amplifier. She deliberately ignored it, and her clear voice and diction carried to every seat in the hall. In 1911 she made an address to a large audience in the Metropolitan Opera House. When she finished there was utter silence and she told her great friend, the Hon. Joseph H. Choate, that she had been a failure. To which he replied, "You haven't been. Don't you see that the whole audience is crying?" All this the general public knew.

But the public did not know her talents in other

directions. She might have become a fine singer of opera. For, when she and her sister were in their teens, she was urged by the Manager of the Royal Opera House in Hanover, Germany, to take up singing seriously as a profession. Had she seriously studied the piano, she might have become a pianist of ability.

She could have been a distinguished actress. For she had the temperament, voice, and ability to project and imitate personality. When she and her sister were young women and studying at their father's summer home in Burlington, Vermont, one day she disguised herself as a disagreeable old woman. She approached her sister using a voice and words suitable to the role and made herself so disagreeable that her sister promptly ordered her off the premises.

Also, she might have been a sculptress of high rank. For, with very little teaching and only a little criticism by Saint Gaudens, she produced tellingly lifelike bronze busts of her father, a high relief of Carl Schurz, and a bronze bas relief of Anton Seidel. They were all great likenesses, for she had the gift of portraiture. Mr. Schurz was so pleased with it that he said that he wished it to be his official portrait. So, he took a tool and marked on the clay a facsimile of his signature, C. Schurz, and also wrote on the clay his favorite motto: "Ubi libertas ibi patria." This bronze portrait stood on the stage of Carnegie Hall where the

memorial service to Mr. Schurz was held. Later this portrait was given to the Department of the Interior in Washington, for Mr. Schurz was for some time Secretary of the Interior, and it has been placed in the waiting room with portraits of past secretaries. The bronze bas relief of Anton Seidel may now be seen in the Memorial Room of the Metropolitan Opera House.

She also did an admirable bronze profile bas relief likeness of her friend, the late May Sinclair, the novelist. Also, she did in bronze a remarkably life-like profile portrait of her great friend, Helen Keller. When Miss Keller felt it she was so pleased that with a tool she wrote her well-known signature on the clay. It appears in the bronze, and Winifred put on it Miss Keller's famous remark to her: "To be blind is to see the bright side of life."

She could, perhaps, have become a painter of some ability. For with no training, she turned out charmingly imaginative pictures using pen, crayons, or water colors.

She dearly loved flowers and they were to her a necessity. She was fond of repeating the Near East saying, "If of fortune you have a dole, use half for food and half for flowers to feed your soul." To her, flowers were almost human and she loved to have them around her. Her favorites were rose-pink roses and carnations and any other rose-pink flowers. She would never wear flowers;

she could not bear to see them fade. She always treated flowers as carefully as children, and made them live longer than any one I ever knew.

She had a great heart, and generosity to a fault. Her heart went out to all who needed help, particularly underdogs. She used to give away so much for the blind, leaving so little for her own use, that her family and friends felt she might eventually be severely handicapped. A great friend, the late Emily Bourne, who gave the Bourne Workshop to the New York Association, willed her \$25,000 to ensure that she would have enough to keep her.

She loved music of all kinds, in which I joined her. But she was far fonder of the theatre than I was.

She had keen pixyish sense of humor which she confined mostly to those she loved. Often she would answer a letter entirely in doggerel, and many of her letters contained lively sketches of cherubs, birds, and animals. This, too, was one of her most entrancing attributes.

Another marked characteristic was her indomitable will. If she wholly believed that something had to be done for the blind, she faced and defeated what would have been insuperable obstacles to most people. It was against great odds that she fought and won to establish the New York Lighthouse, the Paris Lighthouse, and the Rome Lighthouse. To do this, she drove herself

remorselessly, and often those who helped her could not stand the pace she set and either had to cease their efforts or carry on as well as their individual capacities would permit.

Such she was to her official colleagues, here and abroad, and to her friends and intimates.

On June 14, 1945, ended the happiest, most inspired, and most useful period of my life. That was because during those twenty-three years it was my high privilege to be the husband of and co-worker with one of America's great women, Winifred Holt.

Growth of The Lighthouse

1905—Lighthouse founded at Holt home, 44 E. 78th St.

1906—Lighthouse incorporated as The New York Association for the Blind • Factory for blind started on 42nd St. • First home teacher visits blind—training classes started.

1907—First Lay Committee for Prevention of Blindness organized, later to become National Society for Prevention of Blindness • Lighthouse housed in rented building at 118 E. 59th St. • First clubs for blind men and women started.

1912—The Bourne Workshop was opened at 603 First Ave. • River Lighthouse Vacation Home at Cornwall, N. Y. opened • *The Searchlight*, first juvenile braille magazine sent to blind children throughout United States.

1913—The first Lighthouse at 111 E. 59th St. completed and dedicated by President William Howard Taft.

1923—Camp Munger opened for blind children • Lighthouse Players organized.

1924—Annex to Bourne Workshop added.

1925—*The Gleams*, a braille magazine for the adult blind, started • Annex to The Lighthouse, 111 E. 59th St. added • Camp Lighthouse, Waretown, N. J. opened.

1928—Residential Clubhouse for Blind Men, 605 First Ave. opened.

1929—Lighthouse Music School opened at 114 E. 60th St.

1930—Eye Clinic opened in 60th St. Bldg. Closed 1940.

1933—Lighthouse Nursery School opened.

1939—Part-time Occupational Therapy Dept. opened.

1940—Lot on 112 E. 60th St. purchased for new addition • Building plans worked on—postponed because of war in 1941.

1949—New Lighthouse on 60th St. authorized and plans accepted for complete new unit including modernization of 59th St. Lighthouse • Demolition of Music School building and beginning of new building • Munger Memorial Cottage for Nursery School children built at Cornwall.

1950—June 15, New 60th St. Lighthouse cornerstone laid by Governor Thomas E. Dewey • Red Cross Braille Transcription and Book Binding Service taken over by the Lighthouse.

1951—New Lighthouse unit completed and dedicated by former President Hoover, April 25, 1951 • Bourne Workshop closed and Lighthouse Industrial Division moved to new plant at 36-20 Northern Blvd., Queens.

A T R I B U T E

by

DAISY FISKE ROGERS

Winifred Holt Mather's vision will help keep alive, through the years, the spirit which dominated her every thought "to help the blind to help themselves." She was indeed a torch bearer, here and abroad, and truly lived up to the saying of a great American, "the world is my country and to do good my religion."





About First Lady of The Lighthouse

“For countless centuries the world’s attitude toward the blind was a compound of pity bolstered somewhat by outright charity. Mrs. Mather’s non-sentimental, practical approach to the problem resulted from her London visit in 1904 to the Royal Normal College and Academy of Music for the Blind. There she met the principal, himself blind, who was soon to be knighted for his unique contributions to the education of the blind. His method of training was the opposite of appeasement, a fact I know well, for I taught under him. Of course Sir Francis Campbell and our Mrs. Mather made enemies. Uncommonly strong characters do; but they are to be commended for it.”

Dr. Edward Ellis Allen, Director Emeritus
Perkins Institution for the Blind

“Winifred Holt Mather’s vision will help keep alive, through the years, the spirit which dominated her every thought ‘to help the blind to help themselves.’ She was indeed a torch bearer, here and abroad, and truly lived up to the saying of a great American, ‘the world is my country and to do good my religion.’”

Daisy Fiske Rogers
Lighthouse Consultant

THE LIGHTHOUSE

The New York Association for the Blind

111 East 59th Street

New York 22, N. Y.